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LEOPARDI AND EVOLUTIONAL PESSIMISM.

An unshakable confidence in the human mind as a trustworthy and adequate instrument for the discovery of truth must lie, of course, at the basis of all valid science and philosophy whatsoever. The attempt to eliminate every sentiment from our solution of the problem presented by the coëxistence of ourselves and the world of stimuli, has, we feel, been futile, and might indeed have been foreseen. The validity of our rational is no less questionable than that of our emotive nature, and it is now clear that only their healthy coöperation, for which mutual esteem is indispensable, can bring man to the highest and happiest state.

We owe much to those who in the last three centuries have striven to consider the world dispassionately, and to follow humbly the paths of speculation indicated by the facts, proceeding along them only so fast as the facts seemed to urge. To do this it was necessary that the mind should be freed from prepossessions, from the powerful bias given to it by theories and beliefs which had consulted rather the wishes of man than his actual experience. It was rightly judged that the clue to the external labyrinth must be sought for in itself.

Unfortunately all Protestants end in being dogmatists quite as thorough-going and intolerant as those against whom they protested as tyrannical—if, indeed, not more so. Having won their independence, the physical scientists propose now in their turn to dictate terms of submission. They abandon their original contentions. The world was most

likely to yield its own explanation. The mind of man, however, is to find its explanation not in itself, but in the world of mass and motion. The tables are turned; the once oppressed becomes oppressor; but we fancy that this state cannot long continue. If it be true, as Mr. Spencer admits, that matter and spirit are alike unknowable, not to the advantage of matter; and as Mr. Fiske assures us, that what we only know immediately and certainly is the *self*, the person; then if we are to transcend phenomena at all, it would seem that the unknown reality might to better advantage be symbolized (felt, perhaps, if not thought) as eternal person than as unthinking impersonal mechanism.

At all events it is well for us to remember — both those who admit and those who do not admit the justice of the extravagant claims of some evolutionists¹ — that according to them our faculties have become what they are by use; that the fashioner of them has been vital necessity. Truth can get no greater authority than Good. That is true to us which to believe true has conduced to the preservation of the race. The question, then, as to the truth of the mechanical theory, of its credibility at least, must be “does the acceptance of it (complete and consistent) tend to increase the chances for life of social man.” The emotions are the language of value. Nothing *is* for man until it has found its emotional equivalent. Good is “good”, because it is conceived to bring “good.” There are the persistent wants of the soul — wants which become acuter with what we are pleased to call the progress of civilization. If man believed that science must force him to starve them — that science will arrest his advance by bringing about the atrophy of what faculties he most prizes in himself, what perverse madness could enlist him in its laborious service? Did he believe Truth to be an anthropophagous fiend, would

¹ Since this part of the paper was written the writer has read *The Foundations of Belief* by the Rt. Hon. Arthur James Balfour (Longmans, Green & Co., New York, 1895), and would in particular like to call attention to the eloquent paragraph beginning at the bottom of page 29.

man, could man pursue him to his den with infinite pains? Does not Lotze¹ speak the plain truth when he says: "If the object of all human investigation were to produce in cognition a reflection of the world as it exists, of what value would be all its labor and pains, which could result only in *vain* repetition, in an imitation within the soul of that which *exists* without it? What significance could there be in this barren rehearsal? What should oblige thinking minds to be mere mirrors of that which does not think unless the discovery of *truth* were in all cases likewise the production of some *good*, valuable enough to justify the pains expended in attaining it? The individual, ensnared by that division of intellectual labor that inevitably results from the widening compass of knowledge, may at times forget the connection of his narrow sphere of work with the great ends of human life; it may at times seem to him as though the furtherance of knowledge for the sake of knowledge were an intelligible and worthy aim of human effort. But all his endeavors have in the last resort but this one meaning, that they, in connection with those of countless others, should combine to trace an image of the world from which we may learn *what we have to reverence as the true significance of existence*, what we have to *do*, and what to *hope*. . . . Whenever any scientific revolution has driven out old modes of thought, the new views that take their place must justify themselves by the permanent or increasing satisfaction which they are capable of affording those *spiritual demands which cannot be put off or ignored*."

It is with a more or less conscious sense of this need of self-justification that attempts are made every now and then to furnish substitutes for old faiths which science conceives itself to have made impossible. One cannot but observe that in this field of the apologetics of science the com-

¹ See page 9 of Author's Introduction to the *Microcosmus: an Essay concerning Man and his relation to the World*. By Hermann Lotze. Translated from the German by Elizabeth Hamilton and E. E. Constance Jones: Scribner & Welford, New York, 1888. The italics are not the author's.

monest and most luxuriant growths are equivocations more or less subtle. For the great multitudes, life must be miserable if the race is to go forward; the comfort of the majority can be purchased only at the cost of general degeneracy. Men therefore are robbed of any ignorant hope of better times in the near future. There must of necessity steal over the man, who does not take for granted that he is an exception, a sense of the questionable worth of life for himself. And if he should conceive himself fortunate, he would, in proportion to his nobility, never be able to reconcile himself to the failure of so many others. The only two escapes from the view that life is for the great majority not worth to themselves the living, are such as few will seriously recommend. Deliberately extirpate all those faculties for which this present life affords no scope; then the normal exercise of the rest will give a reasonable amount of gratification. Or, provide for all those refined yearnings, delicate intimations, sensitive affections, ecstatic aspirations, or delusive satisfactions which you know to be false. When you shrewdly suspect that life is not worth living, that it disappoints what you feel to be your just expectations of dominant holiness and loveliness, fly to an artificial paradise: look at a building, a statue, a picture, read a poem, listen to a symphony. This may do for the cultured few. Again the masses must be left without hope. Besides, no æsthetic satisfaction will do duty for an ethical or metaphysical one. If art be known for an impostor, we shall lose our joy in art. We shall get no comfort when once the momentum of the old faiths is exhausted. We shall resent its appeals as trifling with our despairs.

The purpose of this lengthy preliminary discussion has been only to indicate how little the Evolutional Philosophy has yet done to justify itself by supplying mind and heart with true peace.¹ Sneers at sentimentality will not answer,

¹ By Evolutional Philosophy is understood throughout this paper all systems that insist on explaining the universe physical and spiritual as *one* continuous growth from *one* beginning; so that mind must look for its credentials to its source — unthinking processes.

for, from its own account of the mental faculties of man, has not the very distinction between "truth" and "falsehood" imported in the first a power to keep alive? The philosophy which shall give its adherents the best chance of survival in the struggle for existence is the only true one, since it will finally prevail. Is it not fair to ask, "does this Evolutional Philosophy liberate a current of vitality?" Does it or does it not "fit the average man to live"? If this question be deemed a fair one, the reader will not feel that he is being inopportunately presented with an account of Leopardi's poetry. For the facts of the poet's pitiful career he may be referred to the pleasing essay of Mr. Howells.¹ Still, let it be observed that what seems to the present writer most noteworthy is not that he was diseased in body, unfortunate in more respects than one, given no scope for his marvelous powers; but that while many men experience all this more or less, so acute a mind as Leopardi's, who anticipated the attitude to man of the Evolutional Philosophy, found no consolatory compensations. As a matter of fact the instinctive love of life is with most men so strong that they find themselves unable to accept practically the pessimism which may and does logically follow from their philosophy. It hardly seems fair to derive Leopardi's pessimism from his misfortunes. Many men under circumstances quite as adverse, have, thanks to another theory of life, traditionally or rationally held, been optimists. What makes the case of Leopardi particularly interesting is that it was apparently uncomplicated with moral laxity as that of Heine; that the tone of life being all but wholly neutralized by ever present pain and disappointment, he was able to accept the practical pessimism of his philosophy entire; that his ingenuous simplicity and directness, his artistic desire for the beautiful, tended to make him think nobly of man's possibilities; that he was obliged to put the fullest possible strain upon his philosophy for comfort, since he

¹ *Modern Italian Poets, Essays and Versions.* By W. D. Howells. New York: Harper & Bros., 1887. Essay vii., p. 248.

was deprived of almost every other source, except a few devoted friendships; that he was content with no evasions however spurious, and demanded either that he should be comfortless, or that his comfort should be consistent with his philosophy.

Now because Leopardi derived his mechanical theory of the universe solely from the new astronomy and only anticipated the conclusions of biology without any knowledge of the argument that has since led up to them, the reader will see that his poetry does not always put the case as strongly as one might conceive it to be put to-day. The poet is sometimes driven to doubt his radical conclusions, when, had he lived later he would have felt no scruple.

On one occasion he exclaims: "O human nature, if thou be altogether frail and vile, dust and shadow, how is it thou art capable of such lofty sentiments? and if thou be noble in part, how then is it that thy worthier impulses and thoughts can be by such slight and base causes kindled in turn and quenched." (*"Sopra il ritratto di una bella donna,"* l. 50.) We are all convinced, do what we will, that whatever ulterior ends may or may not be served by our existence, it is immediately for our own sakes (the sake of us as individuals, or as societies) that we live. And yet Leopardi observes "that man is born to burden-bearing, and birth is danger of death; his first experience suffering and torture; and from the beginning father and mother set about to console him for being born." (*Canto notturno*, l. 40.) All feel alike the need of happiness, yet our miseries have the inveterate objectivity of the landscape, while our happiness (dubitable experience that it is) resembles the varying illumination of that landscape. For "all is mysterious except our suffering" (*Ultimo canto di Saffo*, l. 45), while "deliverance from anguish constitutes for us delight." (*La quiete dopo la tempesta*, l. 45.) And yet we must seek pleasures, of which unconscious quest our vital hopefulness is the witness, until it abandons us, as we leave youth behind.

“What boundless thoughts, what dreams ecstatic did the sight inspire of that far sea, those azure hills I hence discern, which some day I then thought to traverse: imagining worlds beyond them, worlds veiled in mystery, in which my life should taste mysterious delights. (*Le ricordanze*, l. 17.) But all such boyish expectations are foredoomed to disappointment. “Is this the world, are these the pleasures, the love, the achievements, the events of which we discoursed so much together? Is this the fate of human creatures?” (*A Silvia*, l. 55.) Personifying, in spite of himself, he complains, “O nature, nature, wherefore dost thou not afterwards grant what thou then didst promise? Why practise such frauds upon thy children?” (*A Silvia*, l. 28.) “It pleased thee that our youthful hope should be deluded by life; of miseries full is the sea of years; of ills the only end is death.” (*Sopra un basso rilievo*, l. 59.) Aye, as the setting moon that leaves the nightly landscape to its mournful monotony, “so youth vanishes, and forsakes mortal life; the shadows are put to flight, and all hours of illusive joy; far-away hopes shrink, whereon our mortal nature leans, and life is left forlorn and in the gloom.” (*Il Tramonto della luna*, l. 20.) To this topic Leopardi reverts so often with such pathos that I cannot refrain from quoting once more: “O hopes, my hopes, illusive exquisite of my first years! Say what I will, I come back at length to you. In spite of the lapse of time and all change of affections and of thought, I cannot forget you. Phantasms, I know, are glory and honor; empty self-deceit all pleasures and joys; and life is without fruit—a useless misery. Though so blank my years are all, and though so void, obscure, my mortal lot, full well I know that fortune robs me but of little. Yet, yet at times, I think again of you, O my old hopes; and of those dear first imaginative flights; then, casting a look on my abject life so full of pain, and seeing that death is all that is now left me of expectations once so vast, my heart becomes oppressed, and to my fate I cannot wholly reconcile myself. And when at length this death

so much desired shall be at hand, and the end has come of my ill destiny, when earth shall be to me a valley estranged, and from my sight the future will fly, surely memories of you, my hopes, will visit me, and that sweet vision will force from me a sigh, will make it bitter to have lived in vain, and will mingle a sense of sorrow with the delight of dying." (*Le ricordanze*, l. 76.) Labor is full of desire for rest, and, comparing the destiny of man with the dumb friends he domesticates and tyrannises over — how strange: "O flock of mine, taking thy rest, happy, I fancy in that thou art unaware of thy miserable state! What envy of thee I feel, not only because thou dost escape almost all sense of trouble, and that wants, hurts, and quick fears are at once forgotten as soon as over, but because thou feelest no vexed sense of weariness; while, if I lie at rest, a feeling of the insipidity of life assails me!" (*Canto notturno*, l. 105.) "Maybe had I the wings wherewith to fly above the clouds, tell the stars in turn, or fare from peak to peak as doth the thunder, happier should I be, O my dear flock; happier, O white moon! Or maybe, my thought forsakes the truth when viewing the lot of others; maybe in all forms, in all states, in savage lair or cradle, fraught with ill is the day of birth to whosoe'er is born." (*id.*, l. 135.)

Observe in the confirmation of the disappointment of realized rest, that to the unsophisticated village folk Saturday, not Sunday, is the day of days. "This of the seven is the most delightful day, full of hope and joy: to-morrow sadness and sensible tedium the idle hours will bring, and to his wonted toil each, in his thoughts, returns." (*Sabato del villaggio*, l. 38.) The comforts that men have drawn from the imagination are more and more unavailable. "The Truth, so soon as it appears, forbids our access to thee, O beloved Imagination; and from thee our mind is being forever estranged; the years undermine thy once stupendous power; and dead is now the comfort of our woes." (*Ad Angelo Mai*, l. 100.) At a moment of enthusiasm in spring

he cries: "O lovely nature, harken the aching cares, the ignoble doom of mortals, and restore to my spirit also the bygone fire; *if* thou dost indeed *live*, if aught there *be* at all dwelling in heaven, or on the sunny earth, or in the deep sea's bosom, that is not pitiful but at least *conscious* of our woes." (*Alla primavera*, l. 88.) If nature then can be said to have any aims (for aims presuppose consciousness, reason, and will) "in all she does she hath other objects than our good or our ill," (*Sopra un basso rilievo*, l. 108) "for not of our *well* being has nature been solicitous, but merely of our *being*; she cares for nothing else than our preservation, even if she preserves us unto woe." (*Il risorgimento*, l. 121.) The personification, involved in the apostrophies to nature, the capitalization of the word, are evidently only a rhetorical device, a habit surviving the modes of thought that originated and justified it.

There remain but two always accessible sources of joy, and one is the beauty of external nature. Let this passage suffice: "At times I sit alone upon a little hill at the edge of a lake encircled with its crown of silent trees. There, when he has reached his noon in heaven, the sun paints his own still image, and no blade of grass, no leaf ruffles in the wind; the water ripples not, no locust rattles, no bird on bough stirs feather, no butterfly flits lightly; nor sound nor motion, nigh or far, is heard or seen. Most absolute peace holds all, so that I, sitting motionless, almost forget myself and the world about; already I feel as though my body lay at rest, no spirit, no conscious sense stirs it any longer, and its antenatal quiet mingles with the silence of the scene." (*La vita solitaria*, l. 22.) But we become less and less sensitive to nature's beauty; for this very appreciation belongs, as Wordsworth well perceived, to youth. "Blessed a thousand times, is he who loses not with lapse of years the fading powers of dear imaginings; to whom fate gave the boon of keeping ever fresh his heart's first youth." (*Al conte carlo Pepoli*, l. 110.) For himself he anticipates no such unusual good fortune. "When alto-

gether this heart shall have grown hard and cold, nor any more the serene and sunny smile of these solitary fields, nor the spring song of birds at early morn, nor the dumb moon, under a limpid sky o'er hills and vales, shall move me; when dead and mute for me both nature's beauty, and art's shall have become, and every noble thought, all tender affections shall be strange and quite unknown; then seeking my only consolation, I shall elect other pursuits less sweet wherewith to entrust the loathed remainder of my life." (*id.*, l. 126.) Evidently, however, the search for speculative truth leaves the heart unsatisfied, nay, with his point of departure, must end in its bankruptcy. "Whither are gone our fascinating dreams of unknown refuges, of inhabitants unknown, of the daily hostelry of the stars, and the remote bed of the virgin dawn, and of the nightly sleep of the great sun? L \grave{o} , they in one instant were dispelled, and outlined in a small chart lies the world: Lo, all things alike! New discovery extends only the limits of the non-existent." (*Ad Angelo Mai*, l. 91.) The truth which his philosophy sets before him, must be qualified as "unpropitious," "cruel," "merciless," and loyalty to it is a sort of magnanimous fanaticism akin to suicide.

There is one other source of joy always accessible, and that is love. "For him who understands love's nature, it is a spur to noble deeds." (*Nelle nozze della sorella*, l. 45.) But there are the separations, physical as well as those of the heart. Death steps in between lovers, in the end; and while together, this mysterious third is always near. Besides, in his poem, "Amore e morte," he sets forth poetically a doctrine of their inevitable association. Whenever one feels a great thrill of elevating passion, a perfect fearlessness comes over one; a sort of courting indeed of extinction supplants the usual love of life. Hence, he would deduce that death is a higher destiny. He resolves, "Let me cast away every hope with which the world, in children's company, finds comfort; nor expect at any time aught else but Thee; await serenely that day when I shall lay my head

to sleep upon thy virgin breast." (l. 117.) And yet he is sorely perplexed when he contemplates his conclusion. Why should death, if the normal end and aim of life, be made naturally horrible? "The only refuge from ills—death—this inevitable end, this law immutable, thou hast set for man's career. Wherefore, alas, after aching ways, at least not have ordained a pleasing goal? Instead, why is it that she whom we have ever before our souls as a certainty while we live, whom thou hast appointed sole comforter of our woes, is by thee cloaked in black draperies, surrounded with shadows so sad? Wherefore have shown us a heaven more terrible to view than any seas?" (*Sopra un basso rilievo*, l. 62.) Besides, we find ourselves, with all our philosophic idolatry of death, unable to wish it to others, particularly to the young. "If it be ill for the immature to die, wherefore allot it to beings innocent? If it be good, wherefore make such departure seem to him who leaves, and him who stays alive, the most terrible of ills?" (*id* l. 49.) If it be truth, as I cannot but firmly believe, that life is a misfortune and death a blessing, yet who can ever wish for those he loves (as undoubtedly he ought) that their last day would hasten?" (*id.*, l. 82.)

Let us summarize what has been shown in these copious excerpts. Life is, for the seekers of pleasure at least, predominantly painful. One of the great sources of joy, the capacity to imagine and believe truth such as we wish, is gone. To see purpose in nature, is to personify what is, so far as we can tell, impersonal. "From everything in heaven and on earth, whirling without rest, always to return thither whence it came, I can conceive no use or fruit." (*Canto notturno* l. 94.) Beauty of nature is no permanent consoler, because our sensitiveness to it diminishes with time. Driven inward, we find that the indulging of reason to the utmost, means to sterilize and kill the heart. Love, the great source of joy, is made by death in itself uncertain; and death is odious for self, piteous in others, do what we will. We cannot derive any pleasure or comfort from a consideration of it as love's inevitable end.

Is it strange if, from all this, there should emerge a species of Nihilism — for what other name shall be given to it? Consciousness is the evil, since its object must be always evil. Driven inward and upward by the sense of the insufficiency of the world, and the insignificance of self, he perceives that it is thought-power alone, absorption in an idea that can deliver one from this oppressive misery. "What world is it, what unexplored immensity, what paradise whither this thy miraculous spell oft seems to lift me? Where, wandering in other than this usual light, my earthly state I utterly forget, and the whole body of fact! Such are, I must believe, the dreams of the immortals. Ah, after all, dear thought, art thou not for the most part a dream wherewith truth arrays herself for beauty's sake? Dream? yea, an evident falsehood! — but thou among delight-giving falsehoods art of divine nature, since so vital and strong that thou dost obstinately hold thine own against truth, ay, and take her place: — nor art thou dispelled, ere in death's arms we sleep." (*Il pensiero dominante*, l. 100).

For the complete enjoyment of this refuge from reality, this exercise of tyrannous thought-powers, the extinction of all emotions and desires is requisite; a scorn of all that seems as if it would still detain the soul. "Now, O tired heart of mine, rest shalt thou have forever. The last illusion, the belief that I am deathless, is utterly dead. Well I know that not only the hope, but the desire for all dear deceits is extinct. Rest thou forever! Throbbled hast thou over-much. Nothing deserves to move thee, nor of thy sigh is the earth worthy. Bitterness, tediousness make up our life — never aught else, — and the world 'mere mire! Henceforth be still. Despair thy last. For to our race fate gave one only gift — death. Now, therefore, scorn at length thyself, nature, the brute Power which to the common harm bears occult sway, and of all that is the infinite vanity!" (*A se stesso*.)

After such a radical extirpation of the heart's desires, such a total denial of the ever-living Maia, he is well pre-

pared to indulge that great thirst for the Absolute, to think on and on till he pass beyond the reach of wing-weary self-consciousness and have pierced into a luminous blackness—black for sheer excess of light, and “thus, in the midst of this immensity my thought is drowned, and shipwreck in such sea to me is sweet.” (*L’infinito* l. 13.)

I have consciously disregarded everything like chronological order in these extracts. The poems seem to have a central unity—a consistency—that can have resulted only from an inveterate hold on one philosophy. Unless we were definitely informed, it would be difficult to decide from internal evidence upon any order of composition whatever. In any case Leopardi’s poems are before us and constitute, what is certainly rare, a logical whole.

Leopardi’s attitude toward his age does not surprise us. I fancy he would have assumed much the same attitude toward any age. “The great and rare is counted folly,” he says to Angelo Mai (l. 145.) He says to his sister, “We scorn virtue while alive, adore her when dead” (*Nelle nozze della sorella* l. 31.) He complains “that even the reward of mere glory is denied to worthy pursuits.” Wiser than Mr. Swinburne, we think, he dreams of no divine democracy: “Power and rule, as much concentrated or as much subdivided as may be, whoever is invested with them, under whatever name, will abuse to the end of time.” (*Palinodia* l. 78.)

His views on the reconstruction of ethics and politics along scientific lines are all definitely stated in “La ginestra,” probably his noblest poem. To combat the charges brought against his poetry, as poetry, seems superfluous. Even his heaviest didactic paragraphs are lifted by an eloquent despair, an onrush of passion into a domain far removed from that of prose. His periods roll on with the fury of a torrent that sweeps all before it. The latent agonizing love of truth, beauty, goodness; the severity of his mood; the sudden illuminative flashes of imagination; the use of nature as a text to every spiritual homily, not

chosen to fit the homily, but the text truly the source of it; all this and more would, it seems, set above the reach of carping criticism the work of this Italian quite as surely as we could wish. The translations in this paper have been faithful in the main, but of course utterly inadequate to the purpose (which has not been the writer's) of the vindication of Leopardi's poetry, as poetry. But, because of the preëminent importance of the poem just alluded to above, a version has been made of it, foregoing all attempts at rhyme, and simply studying to render, if possible, the sense, and to give at the same time an impression of the style, its inversions, its periodical structure, its concision, its impressive severity.¹

LA GINESTRA.

On the arid shoulder here
Of the formidable mount
Vesuvius, fierce destroyer,
Which else of neither tree is cheered, nor flower,
Thou scatterest thy solitary shrubs,
Sweet-smelling broom,
Content with wildernesses. Thee I saw
With thy sprays gracing also the waste lands
Which girdle the city round
That once of man was queen,
And with their staid appearance taciturn
To the passerby seemed to bear witness
And make memorial of her empire lost.
Now once again, lover of sorrowful sites
Forsaken, of broken fortunes comrade true,
I view thee on this soil. These fields
With ashes unproductive strewn,

¹ A version of Leopardi's best poems has been published by G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1887. Mr. Frederick Townsend, however, cannot be at all relied upon for the philosophic passages. He paraphrases recklessly and often makes sentimental nonsense of what in the original is stern sense. Cf. *To Himself*, p. 124 with Mr. Howells' admirably faithful version in *Modern Italian Poets*, p. 263.

Mantled with indurate lava,
Under the wanderer's footstep resonant,
Where finds the snake his nest
And writhes in the sun, and where returns
The rabbit to his wonted hollow lair,
Were once blithe rural homes, ploughed ground
Golden with wheat ears, loud
With lowing of herds;
Gardens and palaces
For the great a refuge pleasurable
Of idle ease; cities far-famed
Once stood which the fierce mount
With fiery torrents from his fulminant mouth
Along with their indwellers whelmed.
One common desolation all enfolds
Where thou, O gracious flower dost stand,
And sendest, as though of others' ruin piteous,
To heaven incense of most sweet fragrancy
The waste wild comforting. These scenes let him
Visit whose use 'tis to extol
Our lot with praise; let him take note
For *our* race how solicitous
Fond nature is; and the vast might
With equitable measure here can he mete
Of that humanity, which, with slight stir
When danger least is feared,
A heartless foster-mother in part extirpates,
And with some motion little less light
Is able utterly to annihilate.
In these realms stand depicted
Of our human generations
The magnificent progressive destinies!
Look hither! here glass thyself.
Arrogant, fatuous age.

That didst the path forsake — till then
By thought reanimate beckoned on —
And tracing back thy steps
Dost boast of thy retreat
Proclaiming it advance!
To thy child's play all gifted souls
Whose hostile fate made thee
Their parent, tribute of worship pay,
Tho' at times, among themselves
They make of thee their jest.
Not I shall go down to my grave thus shamed;
A light task 'twere for me
After the rest to pattern, and,
Raving in manner set,
Make to thine ear my song acceptable.
But I choose rather that the full disdain
Which in my heart is pent
Have utterance as open as may be,
Albeit most well I know
Whoever to his own age proves
O'ermuch distasteful, soon is quenched
By dull oblivion! Of which curse
That I must share with thee,
Till now have I made merry!
Thou dreamest of freedom still
And wouldst at the self-same time
Have Thought be slave again;—
To which alone 'tis due if we have risen
Partly from savagery, with whose sole aid
Our culture waxes, which conducts alone
Our public fortunes forth
To better things. Thus did the truth
Displease thee, which the bitter lot
Taught, and the station low

Assigned to us by Nature; for this cause
Basely didst turn thy back
On the light that made it clear;
And thou — a runagate —
Callest *him* base, who doth pursue
The light; — and only him great-souled
Who, flouting himself, or others, fool or knave,
Above the stars our mortal rank exalts!

A man that's destitute, with limbs
Infirm, — but lofty soul wellborn, —
Nor vaunts, nor fancies himself
In gold rich, — and robust;
To opulent living, among the throng,
And valorous person makes
No farcical pretense;
But lets, without false shame, appear
His lack of strength and wealth; in open speech
Of them makes mention, and of his state
With truth accordant shapes his estimatè.
A foolish creature, — not magnanimous, —
Do I deem him, who, born
To perish and in suffering reared,
Should say "for pleasure was I framed."
And with offensive arrogance
Fill volumes; loftiest destinies
And novel felicities
Whereof not our planet alone
But the whole heavens know nought,
Pledging to a race whom a wave
Of storm-stirred sea, a breath
Of air malignant, a subterranean shock, —
So utterly destroys
That with great difficulty
Their memory persists.

A noble nature hath
Who dares to lift against
The common doom his mortal eye,
And with frank phrases,—nought from the truth
Deducting—the ills that make our fate
Acknowledges, and our low station frail;
Who shows himself great, valiant
In suffering; nor augments
With fratricidal hates and wraths
(Than other ills more grievous) his distress;
Nor holds man answerable
For what he suffers, but assigns
To Her the blame; who is indeed
Guilty:—as to birth mother, but
In heart, stepmother of mankind!
Her he calls Foe; and thinking
(As is most true) human society
Originally in martial order drawn
Her to oppose, confederate he esteems
All men, encircling them with love sincere;
Offering, and looking to returns
Of potent and prompt aid
In alternate perils, in the pains
Of common warfare. His right hand
To arm against offending fellow man,
To fetter his neighbor, or in his path
Set hindrances, he folly deems
As 'twould be in a camp
Besieged by hostile armies when the assault
Is at its hottest, forgetful of the foe
To start a bitter feud among one's friends;
To let the sword flash bare,
Flight-spreading, among one's brothers in arms!
Thoughts such as these

When they have grown (as once they were)
Familiar to the masses; and the fear,
That first in social ties knit men,
By veritable science is in part
Brought back; then honorable
And noble citizen-intercourse,
Equity and sweet mercy, another root
Will have obtained than fables insolent,
Founded whereon the popular probity
Is wont to stand erect as safe
As can what hath its stay in what is false.

Ofttimes o'er these ravaged tracts
Which the congealed flood cloaks sombrely,
Swelling as tho' in billows it did roll,
I sit me down at night
And watch the stars, out of the blue
Of purity absolute on high,
Dart on the melancholy heath their fires,
Which afar off the smooth sea mirroreth;
And all about, o'er the whole hollow heaven,
The universe with sparkles scintillate.
And when my eyes I raise
To fix those lights that to their view
Show as mere dots, yet are so vast
That measured by them earth and sea
Are but a dot indeed; to which
Not merely man, but this world-globe
Whereon man is as naught,
Is utterly unknown; and when
I gaze upon those knots of clustering stars
Beyond all measure more remote,
That unto us as mists appear, by which
Not man, nor the mere earth, but all —
(For number infinite and for mass —

Our golden sun included —) all the stars
We see are unsuspected, or appear
To them, as they to earth: a point
Of nebulous brilliancy;—what then
Seemest thou to my mind
O child of man? Remembering, in turn,
Thy state below, well set forth by the soil
I tread; and then, how nevertheless
Thou dost believe thyself
Lord, and appointed End for all that is!
And how oft thou wast pleased to feign
Upon this obscure grain of sand minute
Called earth, because of thee
The Framers of the universe descended
Frequent converse pleasurable to hold
With some of thine;—and how, renewing
Such fatuous dreams, insulted are the wise
Even by this present Age
Which seems for knowledge to outtop
And civil manners all times hitherto —
What feeling then, unhappy mortal race
What thought of thee at last my heart assails?
I know not if contempt or pity 'tis prevails!
As from a tree drops a dwarf apple down
Which toward the Autumn's close
No other power but its own ripeness flings
To earth; and, in the fall, the precious homes
Of some ant-people, tunnelled in soft turf
At cost of infinite toil, it crushes, depopulates;
And the labors, and the ample store
Assiduously collected by that folk,
With provident strain, prolonged
Throughout the summer season, in one instant
Buries;—so from the thunderous womb

Hurled to the heavens profound
A night and ruin — compact
Of ashes, cinders, rocks, with seething streams
Dilute — that fell as a leaden hail;—
Or, a vast flood of boulders, liquefied
Metals, and molten sand
Hissing adown the mountain's grassy flanks,
Wasted, destroyed, and whelmed
In a few seconds, the cities which the sea
Bathed on her farther shore,
And here now over them goats browse,
While cities new rise on the other side,
For which the buried make
Foundations firm; and the steep mount
Spurns with its trampling foot the prostrate walls.
Nature nor venerates, nor hath in care
Man more than ant; and, if more rare
Be the slaughter of man than ant
Unto no other cause 'tis due
But that less numerous is man's progeny!
Full eighteen centuries have sped
Since, by fire's violence oppressed,
Vanished these populous seats; but still
The humble peasant who his vineyard tends,
Who in these fields with difficulty
By the dead and cindered soil is fed,
Lifts a suspicious eye
Up to the fatal peak, which no whit tamed,
Yet sits terrific, threatens yet
Ruin to him, his sons
And their scant patrimony. Ofttimes
The wretch upon the roof
Of his rustic cot, the whole night long will lie
Sleepless in the wandering airs;

And leap up more than once
The course of the dread seething mass to explore
That pours adown the sandy back
Forth from the exhaustless hollow gorge
With whose reflected glow
Gleam the sea beach of Capri, Naples' port,
And Mergellina. Should he see
It drawing nigh, or in the depths
Of his own well hear the water gurgle hot —
His sons he rouses, in all haste his wife,
And fleeing with whatever they can snatch
Of their poor property, they watch from far
Their wonted dwelling, and the little field
Their sole defense from famine, fall a prey
To the prowling flood inexorable,
That crackles as it reaches them, and spreads
Stiffening forever over all.

To the rays of heaven is restored,
After age-long oblivion, dead Pompei,
Like an interr'd skeleton
By piety or greed exhumed.
And, from the desolate forum
Standing among the files
Of columns truncated, the traveller
A long while contemplates
That mount with its twin peaks,
The smoking crest that still
Threatens the scattered ruins.
And, in the horror of night's secrecy
Over the vacant amphitheatres
And toppled temples, and the houses wrecked,
Where hides the bat her young
(Like to a dismal torch
That circles ominously

Through empty palaces)—
The dazzling glare of the funereal lava
Flies, lurid in the glooms afar,
And tinges all the landscape round.
So, ignorant of man,
Of the stretch of times he ancient deems,
Of the substitution regular
Of child for sire,— Nature alone
Stands still in youth, or moves
Along a road of so great sweep
That motionless she seems. Meanwhile,
Fall kingdoms, peoples pass, and tongues
Whereof no note she takes —
But *man*, dares arrogate
The glory, for himself, of endless days!
And thou, slow-flowering broom
That with thy perfumed sprays
Adornest these marred lands.
Thou, too, soon must succumb
To the subterranean fires,
Which visiting once more
Places familiar grown,
Will spread out their consuming skirts
Over thy gentle shrubs:
And thou wilt bow thine innocent head,
Not vainly stubborn, under the load of death;
Yet not ere then, shall it be bent
In futile supplication cowardly
Unto thy future slayer; neither self-lifted
With insane pride, unto the stars;
Nor above the waste — where not thy choice
But fate decreed thee birth and dwelling place;
Yet, wiser, yea so much less weak, than man
In that thou'st not believed thy feeble kind
Rendered by fate, or thee imperishable!

Leopardi's like shall never be again. We are sorry, and yet we are glad. Even his natural enemies must forgive him for existing, since he is alone of his curious class. Most of us feel at least remotely akin to him, however, and admire ourselves for our rare, not to be duplicated poet-relative. Matthew Arnold offers opportunities of clever comparison. So does Heine. But Leopardi alone is Leopardi, and if we want to embrace all things nobly human, whether glad or sad, we shall be obliged to spend a little hour of devotion at his private shrine.

WILLIAM NORMAN GUTHRIE.

THE FRENCH RENAISSANCE.

That all literature, and indeed all forms of national life, are processes of evolution, is a truth now almost universally recognized among critics worthy of the name, but there are periods when external influences seem to a superficial observer to interrupt the continuity of development, when changes are more rapid and more radical than at others; and from this point of view the sixteenth century is absolutely unique in French literature. For however varied the expression of that age may be, protestant, pagan, humanistic, there is in it no place and no representative for the manner or the matter of mediæval literature. Calvin, Rabelais, and Ronsard drew all of them their inspiration from antiquity, all of them were practically ready to make a *tabula rasa* of the centuries that separate Augustine from Petrarch, but each went to antiquity with a different mind and drew from it a different lesson. Calvin seeks primitive Christianity, Rabelais Greek naturalism, Montaigne the sceptical and practical realism of Rome, Ronsard turns with a passionate longing to the sun of classic art.

So we have to follow out in this century and in those that succeed three main tendencies, not indeed without subdivisions and intertwinings, for literary psychology is not a geometric science and a strict classification attains clearness only by inaccuracy; but still as elements sufficiently distinct from one another to make it profitable to ask in every case in what proportion they enter into each great writer's work and genius. There is first the temper that recoils from the abuses of the Church and from what it regards as the accretions of mediæval ethics and seeks to restore from the Bible, and the Fathers that suit their purpose, a "primitive Christianity" to their mind. These are the Protestants, the Huguenots, sober, serious, earnest, religious men whom France will miss from her intellectual and still more from

her moral life, when she has persecuted and banished them. Uncomfortable intransigents, morose sometimes and bitter like our own Puritans, but after all the moral salt of the earth, whom perhaps one would not like to be one's self, but whom one is quite proud to have had for an ancestor. Then there are the Gallio's, men who see that there is something rotten in the Church of their fathers, but do not think that they were born to set it right, men who love ease, beauty, grace, and have a sort of dilettante joy of life. These are the humanists, who toy with Theocritus and Horace, are fascinated with Anacreon, and have a more distant admiration for the truly popular epic of Homer than for the court epic of Virgil; but who see in it all a play of fancy, not a philosophy of life. And finally there are the neo-pagans who find in the bankruptcy of mediævalism the bankruptcy of Christianity, who think to have done at once with St. Augustine and with St. Thomas Aquinas, whose ambition is a naïve hedonism, more easy to their age than to ours, who find the old Church more tolerant than the new, and so remain as a rule nominally Catholic and are seldom called upon to suffer more than temporary inconvenience for their thinly masked heresies.

The causes of this sudden outburst of independent thought were numerous and have been often indicated. The discovery of America and still more the discovery of the solar system had changed man's point of view of his place in nature. As Faguet¹ observes, "The narrow world of the middle ages, with its sky very low and its God very close, disappeared almost suddenly. We were living in a little low house where we were watched from the top of a neighboring tower by a severe and good master who had given us his law, followed us with his eyes, sent us frequent messengers, protected us, punished us, and held us always in his hand. And suddenly we were living in an out of the way corner of the immense universe. Heaven withdrew into measureless space, and God fled into infinity." That

¹ *Seizième siècle, Avant-propos, p. vii.*

knowledge was indeed too wonderful for that generation. Many lost for a time the feeling of the personality of deity. The science of God might be exalted, clarified, but the love of God grew cold, and men of philosophic mind felt nearer to the school of Athens than to the school of Alexandria or of Hippo, far nearer than to the Angelic or to the Mystic Doctor.

It is a commonplace to connect the Renaissance with the invention of printing and the spread of classical learning, but even here there is perhaps some misapprehension. Many of the classics had been known and used by literary men habitually and constantly since the age of Bede. The "Romance of the Rose" reeks with antiquity of a certain kind, Villon has even traces of the classic lyric spirit. Of course when manuscripts of classic authors were printed they were more widely read. But the point of importance is that they were read in a new spirit and seen in a wholly new light. For just at the time when printing was invented and the inventors looked about them for books to print, it happened that the national literature was at a low ebb, having indeed been steadily degenerating since the thirteenth century in France as in Germany, while at the same time it chanced that, through the fall of Constantinople and other external causes, a vast number of classic manuscripts became for the first time available. Hence the books first multiplied, with some natural exceptions such as the "Bible" and the "Imitation of Christ", were the classics, and these books thus obtained a vantage ground in the minds of the reading public that they could hardly have attained had they been obliged to contest the favor of the once popular writers of the thirteenth century, whom time and the widening of the human mind had now crowded from view. This again has been admirably expressed by Faguet: "On one side were the classics and the writings of the sixteenth century, printed, portable, legible, inconceivably multiplied, on the other side the mediæval books, manuscripts, hard to handle, to take in, to read or to find. So printing gradually

suppressed the middle ages and by presenting antiquity and the sixteenth century to eye and mind under the same forms, in the same styles and types, and as it were in the same language, it expressed and asserted, emphatically that continuation of antiquity by the sixteenth century that was dimly in all minds, and cast, in like measure, the middle ages into the shade as though they had not been."¹ Herein lies the significance of the word "renaissance," a new birth of an old life after ages of quiescence which men despise and make haste to forget, almost as much repelled by their own tradition as they are attracted to a foreign past. It was a state of mind unique in history and full of the germs of political, social, and literary revolution.

The three elements, pagan, humanistic, and protestant, manifest themselves throughout Europe, but with different degrees and results. In Germany the renascence is ethical, religious. The voice of the humanists is feeble and soon lost in domestic strife, while the pagan element was never deeply rooted among them. Here, therefore, the classical renaissance is deferred for more than three centuries, to spring, like a fully armed Pallas, from the brain of Lessing, and to be the presiding genius of the ideal humanist, Goethe. In England, too, the religious side predominates, but always mingled with humanism, while in the Italy of Petrarch and the France of Ronsard the movement is more literary, artistic, and at most crypto-pagan, except for the Huguenots, whose spirit in literature hardly extends beyond Calvin and d'Aubigné. Here the normal state of mind is humanistic, eclectic, "with a christian soul and a pagan art", an illogical compromise that reaches its supreme expression in Chateaubriand, though it can be seen almost everywhere and always in France, as for instance in Boileau's exclusion of christian mysteries from the domain of poetry, and in the resulting impersonality of the whole literature of the classic school. The pagan element in the Renaissance, on the contrary, has predominated only during

¹ Faguet, l. c. x.

a part of the eighteenth century, though it is fundamentally the spirit of Rabelais, of Montaigne, of La Fontaine, and of Molière. This spirit is opposed equally to Catholicism and to Protestantism, while the humanists content themselves with reprobating the latter and its congener, Jansenism. The triumph of the pagan renaissance in the age of Voltaire was short, however. The spirit of the encyclopædists yielded to that of the "Genius of Christianity," while in our own century the pagan tradition has in it an element of Jansenism, and the Reformers have become Free-Thinkers. Since the Romantic school the mark of the period has been a varied individualism, so that the Spirit of the Time, when we seek its name, can answer only "Legion, for we are many."

If now we return to the sixteenth century and seek in it the expression of these various tendencies, we shall find that this age of singular activity owes little to its immediate predecessor save a style to which de la Salle had given a graceful suppleness and the homilists an oratorical flow. In every kind of literary art this century advances by leaps, spurred to activity first and most by the example of the Italian renaissance, for the ambition of their kings had brought them into repeated and close, though disastrous, contact with that ancient home of art, but impelled also by the revival of learning at home and by the religious ferment, which was spread by printing and the accompanying diffusion of primary knowledge, and grew, like yeast, by what it fed on. There is nothing to compare in the fourteenth or fifteenth centuries with the prose satire of the "Menippée" or the barbed verses of d'Aubigné, nothing to match the lyrics of Marot, still less of Ronsard, nothing like the criticism of du Bellay or the dignified drama of Jodelle, no such dainty fiction as blossomed beneath the fingers of Queen Marguerite, no such wit as Beroald's and des Périers', above all nothing to match the stern force of Calvin, the marvellous well-spring of Rabelais' humor, or the novel charm of Montaigne's essays. Nor must we forget the numerous translations that now first betray a restless search

for new inspirations. The drooping taste for idealized adventure receives a fillip from a version of "Amadis of Gaul," the great romance of Spanish chivalry. Amyot turns into prose that may still arouse admiration, "Daphnis and Chloë," that exquisite pastoral of the Greek Longus, as well as Plutarch's lives of the great men of Greece and Rome, that became a repertory for the novelists and dramatists of the next century. It is clear already that we have to deal with a remarkable diversity of genius. Indeed this is, like our own, a century of literary independence, with few rules save the "Do what thou wilt" of Rabelais' Abbey of Thelëma, and no enduring literary schools or traditions. It was not till its very close that the ethical and artistic aspirations of the renaissance were chastened and united by Malherbe, who "joined with a somewhat heavy hand antique art to modern rationalism", and, though himself a little man, owes to greater followers the distinction of being first in the classical period.

The poetry of the century with the exception of a portion, and that perhaps not the best, of d' Aubigné's verse, is humanistic, continuing with greater resources and greater zeal the study of classic art that was already an old tradition in France. But while the middle ages had sought their inspiration chiefly in the more accessible Latin writers, in Ovid and Boëthius, in Livy and the essays of Cicero, Marot, the first of the renaissance poets who need detain our attention, knew and valued Virgil, Martial, Lucian, and the pseudo-Musæus, while Ronsard, with his fellows of the Pleiad, seems often to have judged the value of an acquisition by its difficulty, prizing Pindar more than Homer, and finding his most genuine delight first in Petrarch, then in Anacreon.

Clement Marot (1497-1544) had the happy fortune to unite northern blood to southern birth, and to combine many of the virtues of each. In his ethics he was a sort of dilettante reformer, of the type that gathered at the court of the broad-minded and tolerant Princess Marguerite, afterward

Queen of Navarre, herself a lyric poet, whose "Marguerites" show a considerable development of that personal note, which the Pleiad, Malherbe, and Boileau were to deaden in France till the rise of the Romantic school. Under her patronage Marot furthered religious disintegration by his translation of the Psalms, which was very popular, even after it was condemned by the Sorbonne as smacking of heresy. Here the subject lent him a dignity that his other work is apt to lack, being in the main pretty rather than beautiful, light rather than strong, graceful rather than grand. His great service to French verse is that he did for it what the "Cent nouvelles nouvelles" had already done for its prose. He restored naturalism and simplicity. For the artificial excess of ornament and allegory he substituted his native grace and delicacy.¹ He is now, and probably will always be, most read for his lighter work, for his songs, epistles, epigrams, animal fables, and the nonsense verses, the *Coq-à-l'âne*. And even in these fields he is chiefly known by a very few *pièces de résistance* of the reading books and anthologies. All school-boys know the "Rat and the Lion", most will have read Marot's deliciously naïve begging letter to King Francis I. (Epist. 11 and 28), but to one who has read the whole body of his work, the songs, satirical or convivial, such as "Frère Lubin", "De-dans Paris", or "Au bon vieux temps", will seem more characteristic of his natural diversity and give us a more human sympathy with one who was always a good fellow, and always seemed so when it was not for his interest to cut a long face.

Marot's imitators were usually more serious, always less talented than he, though to one of them, St. Gélais, French verse owes the introduction of the Italian sonnet. The Calvinistic satirist, Agrippa d'Aubigné (1550-1630) though of a much later period shared Marot's sympathies rather than

¹ The instinct of beauty occasionally fails him, yet he falls but seldom into such crass naturalism as that of "Le laid tétou," a companion piece to Baudelaire's "Charogne."

those of the free-thinking Pleiad, of whom he is sometimes called a "rebellious" follower. His trenchant satires did much to establish the domination of the alexandrine verse that Ronsard had preached rather than practised. They were also the first worthy work in the manner of Juvenal that France has to show. But even before Marot's death a group of young talents had gathered at the Collège Coque-ret whose influence was to be temporarily greater and more lasting in some of its phases than that of any which had preceded them. This "Pleiad" of genius supplemented what was best in Marot's naturalism with a fuller measure of the classical spirit, and so set French literature both in its substance, its form, and its language, in new paths, which those who afterward most blamed their early excesses were most zealous silently to follow. The Pleiad was first in France to preach and practise particular heed to the cadence of the single verse, while lyric poets before them had regarded the stanza as the unit in poetic composition. It was also first to reprove and regulate the once unbridled license of newly coined words and phrases, though even their liberal culture went farther in this than following generations were willing to follow. With delicate feeling they laid stress on the choice and place of words in poetic composition and completed the discredit of an artificial and rhetorical style against which Marot had already raised the standard of revolt. But while Marot had the tact to "choose the wheat and let the chaff be still" in the traditional forms, he introduced into literature no new blood. With Ronsard and his brothers of the Pleiad the case is different. They were conscious innovators, their advent could not have been anticipated, and is indeed almost a unique fact in literary history.

It was probably in 1541 that Pierre de Ronsard (1524-1585), then a travelled young soldier of eighteen, left his profession and the promise of a brilliant career for studious retirement at Paris and the prized instructions of Daurat, who presently began to gather about him a group of enthu-

siastic young scholars such as might have been sought in vain elsewhere in France. Belleau and Baif had preceded Ronsard, Du Bellay he brought back from a journey to Poitiers, Jodelle and Pontus de Tyard soon joined them to complete their "brigade," a name that their number, seven, led them to exchange for Pleiad, when, in 1549, the group first ventured to break their studious silence and to proclaim their views and purposes in the "*Défense et illustration de la langue francaise*," ostensibly by Du Bellay, but really a joint manifesto of the school. The purpose of this famous pamphlet is to urge its readers who have entered the classical camp "to escape from the midst of the Greeks and through the ranks of the Romans and to come back to the heart of their own well-beloved France;" that they may bring with them from those foreign literatures what may be profitable to their own. Now, any man who reads widely in the writings of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, will find the conviction grow that French, as a vehicle of literary expression for the renaissance mind, was in need of just that new blood that could be drawn from the school of Petrarch and from the revival of classical studies, the source whence Italy had already drawn its fuller life. The men of the Pleiad were no Chauvinists, but yet they were thoroughly national and patriotic in their aims, and quick to learn from their own errors, as well as from those of their erudite predecessors,¹ so that their last work is among their best. In them the humanism of the French renaissance reaches its fullest expression, while of the ethical and philosophic phase of the movement they have hardly a trace.

Typical of all, except Jodelle, is Ronsard. He alone is still generally read by cultured men, apart from special studies, and of him alone it is necessary to speak here. His literary life was a constant triumph. Almost from the outset and until his death he was easily first at court and in the popular esteem, and he held this place after his death, though in Desportes and less talented imitators among the

¹ Especially Le Maire des Belges, Heroët, and Maurice Scève.

classical decadents, the blood of the French muse began to run thin, till Malherbe gave a new life to Ronsard's revival of classic taste by infusing it with the rationalistic spirit.

Ronsard asserted his preëminence by his mastery of the language and of metre and by a poetic imagination, without which the most skillful rhymester is only an artisan. In language he encouraged his readers to "a wise boldness in inventing new words so long as they were molded and fashioned on a pattern already recognized by the people". He might have said, with Dante, that language never constrained him to say what he would not, but he had often constrained language to say what it would not, though in this regard the sum of his offending does not exceed two hundred words. However the case may be now in academic France, Ronsard understood for his time exactly what it meant to have a mastery of his own tongue, and though perhaps he strained too much at foreign forms, neglecting the poetic worth that lay in the popular speech, yet in his prose as in his verse there was a vigor and a brilliancy that had not been equalled and was not exceeded till the appearance of Montaigne's "Essays."

It is curious to note that this crystalization of modern prose which Ronsard inaugurated in France, had its parallels in the contemporary literatures of Germany, Spain, and England. In every case it was political unity that gave the first impulse and forced the dialects into subordination to the dominant speech of the court. Ronsard began for the French language very much what Luther accomplished for the German, and in prosody also he was an innovator and a reformer. He failed indeed to revive the Pindaric ode, the value of which for modern use he greatly exaggerated, but he restored the alexandrine to its place of honor, though he did not always follow his own teaching. He was also first to popularize the sonnet, and he introduced an endless variety of lyric stanzas, whose metres were as graceful as they were original. It is here that his best work is to be sought, in the groups called "Amours", "Gaietés",

and in the later odes, rather than in the classical eclogues and odes, or in the unfinished epic, "*La Franciade*". Anthologies never fail to cite "*Mignonne, allons voir si la rose*", and the sonnet to *Hélène* beginning "*Quand vous serez bien vieille*", and they seldom omit the "*Drenched Cupid*", a subject borrowed from *Anacreon*, and interesting because it admits a comparison with *La Fontaine*. But, charming as these are, it is only prescription that causes them to be so uniformly preferred to a score of others, filled with that peculiar renaissance naïveté, and flavor that later centuries so seldom recover. "*La petite colombelle*" yields nothing in the comparison with *Catullus* that it naturally suggests, and "*Cupid's School*", borrowed from *Bion*, is treated in a way to put the creditor under obligations to his debtor. Then, too, there is "*L'Allouette*", the Skylark, as characteristic of France and of his century as *Shelley's* is of England and of his. *Ronsard* is a poet in the fresh vigor of hope. He is not looking with the Englishman's forlorn hope from some *Euganean* hill for the "green isles that needs must be in the deep wide sea of misery". His Skylark is a charming bird to be enjoyed, not to be yearned for as the symbol of what she is not.

Ronsard at his best is the poet of a free and healthy naturalism. Hence the last half century has been peculiarly favorable to a revival of his fame which has betrayed some enthusiasts into an excessive admiration. He lacked clear æsthetic standards because he lacked intellectual independence, but the fact remains that no French poet before *Victor Hugo* is so much in sympathy with the spirit of our age as *Ronsard*, while at the same time no poet has a more cheerful note or a more needed message to this pessimistic generation.

Ronsard lived a happy, hopeful life, and the peaceful current of his declining years was crowned with the "honor, love, obedience, troops of friends" that should accompany it, and with a peaceful and holy death (December 27, 1585). A hopeful, healthy joy of life, rarely crossed by

a querelous cloud, remained with him, as with Goethe, to the end. Just so far as this temper has prevailed in it French literature has been strong and helpful. Ronsard did more than any one man to form the literary language of France. It was his humanism, corrected, modified, and then ignored by Malherbe that dominated the age of Louis XIV, though it was reserved for our own to restore to him his long neglected honor. "The classical spirit was formed in accord with him, without him, and apparently in opposition to him. He had it, he did not inspire it. He is the final type of it, and he is not its founder. He is its first date, and he is not its source. But that is no fault of his."¹

In the drama the Pleiad, represented by Jodelle (1532-1573), was less original and more classical in tone. His "Cleopatra" is the first "regular" tragedy, the first that answers to the distorted conception he had formed of the Aristotelean unities, and his "Eugène" is the first "regular" comedy. Both were studied, as was all his work, more from the Latin than from the Greek, but, defective if not mistaken as was his critical conception, his ideas were so in accord with the French spirit on its good and its weak side that they were industriously imitated till at the close of the century (1599) Alexander Hardy began the rehabilitation of the national drama at the Hotel de Bourgogne, till then still occupied by the mysteries of the Confraternity of the Passion.

The first noteworthy prose work of the sixteenth century, the "Memoirs" of Philippe de Commines (1445-1511), belong, rather to the fifteenth, but as they were not published till 1524, his effect on the literature of the time must be considered with that of the men of the early French Renaissance. What strikes one most in the man's writing, as in his life, is his practical and modern common sense. For the knight-errantry of Froissart he substitutes a diplomatic shrewdness and a wide curiosity that always follows the *what?* with the *why?* Successively the servant of Charles

¹ Faguet, xvi. siècle, 287.

the Bold, of Louis XI., and of Charles VIII., he guarded beneath his diplomacy the naïve faith of a man whose own experience is full of riddles that some sort of providence alone is able to solve, but he joins to this an equally naïve belief in shrewdness and a distrust of over-boldness in the affairs of the world. This undogmatic religiosity is a modern trait, so too is his curiosity, his democratic sympathies, and the natural restraint of his narrative that rarely passes beyond the limits of his immediate observation. Though himself little touched by the renaissance, his attitude toward the Church ranks him among the ancestors of the humanists of whom indeed there is a long line reaching far back into the thirteenth century.

On the other hand Calvin (1509-1564) represented the new spirit of intransigent reform, the attempted restoration of primitive christianity. Trained both for theology and law, he joined in after life the doctor to the lawgiver, and became at once the Moses and the Aaron of the chosen people who left the flesh pots of their French bondage to gather in the Genevan Canaan. With his teaching we have nothing to do here save to note its revolt against mediævalism, but the sober logic and classical polish of his style give him a very high place, if we regard form alone the highest place, among the prose writers of his century. It is sober sense enforced with a lapidarian clearness and precision, and therefore lacking somewhat in sympathy and imagination, bent on commanding rather than winning assent; on being understood rather than on being loved; here too "the style is the man" stern, imperious, lofty, sincere, and sombre,¹ at once borne up and borne down by the all-pervading sense of the immanence of deity. But in the less competent hands of his imitators and successors, his style inevitably degenerated to pedantic heaviness, though not until it had

¹ He tries occasionally to lighten his sermons with some metaphor from common life or even with vulgar dialect, but it is heavy fooling and one feels that he shakes with awkward reluctance this cap and bells. See for instances, as well as for a keen study of Calvin's doctrine, Faguet, *xvi. siècle*, 127 to 197, and especially 192-3.

shown the unguessed powers of French for accurate exposition and subtle disputation.

But this century of renaissance was distinguished no less and characterized much better, by Rabelais, a remarkably keen and learned man who spent his life in ridiculing with the most bitter satire what he still professed to believe. In his career as in his work there appears at first sight a constant vein of insincerity, a Mephistophelean spirit that sees the weak, the laughable, the ridiculous side of that which it holds dearest and holiest; but when work and life are more closely examined, Rabelais' spirit seems rather that of a profound philosopher who discerns the essential antinomy in all apprehension of human truth, so that he rises far above the mere mockery of Lucian or the diabolic ferocity of Swift. Traces of the same philosophic attitude can be found in Reuchlin, in Erasmus, and in other doctors of the Reformation, more learned than bold, but it is in France that this spirit can be most frequently and constantly noted, and the unchallenged leader of its representatives is Francois Rabelais (1495-1553), who is the most complete reflection of the too sanguine hopes of the pagan renaissance, of its serious aspirations, its over-hasty generalizations, and its joy of life.

Rabelais' satire is put into the form of a burlesque romance of adventures, but the form is a very thin disguise, and the thread of the narrative is of the slenderest. Throughout, his real interest is in destructive criticism of the political and social conditions of his time. His mind became constructive only when stirred by the worthlessness of mediæval education or by the abuses of decaying monasticism. The five books¹ of his great satire, which differ sufficiently from one another to be treated as separate works, appeared at various times between 1532 and 1564, when Rabelais had already been eleven years dead and beyond

¹ Brunetière, Lanson, and other critics, hold that the fifth book is a Huguenot pamphlet of another man and time, though posthumous papers of Rabelais were used in its composition.

the reach both of the just indignation and of the petty partisan hate that had pursued him through all his mature years. The first book bears the title "Gargantua", the others "Pantagruel", and it is these that merit both the greatest admiration and the greatest reprobation. They are probably more studied to-day than any other work of the time. They are more witty, more caustic, more profoundly sceptical, more unscrupulous, and more unclean than any other book of that age. Indeed their coarseness is perhaps unparalleled in literature, and serves to hide both the author's wit and his political and pedagogic wisdom. That he should have begun life as a monk, while only his voluntary resignation prevented his ending it as a curate, illustrates the condition of the Church. In the interval between his leaving the Franciscan cloister of Fontenay le Conte and his entry into the presbytery of Meudon, he had been a Benedictine canon, a wandering scholar, a student of medicine, a scientist, physician to a diplomatic ambassador, and a voluntary exile.

Rabelais' book as a whole plays less part in literature than some of the characters in it. Gargantua, the giant father of Pantagruel, was generally recognized as typical of the good-humored, easy-going royalty of Francis I. Panurge, the companion and servant of Pantagruel, and more interesting than his master, embodies, as Saintsbury says, "a somewhat diseased intellectual refinement, and the absence of morality in the wide Aristotelean sense, with the presence of almost all other good qualities." "He is the principal triumph of Rabelais' character-drawing, and the most original, as well as the most puzzling, figure in the book. A coward, a drunkard, a lecher, a spiteful trickster, a spendthrift, but all the while infinitely amusing."¹ Opposed to him is the lusty animalism of Friar John, whose famous Abbey of Thelema, with its hedonistic motto, "Do what thou wilt", represents Rabelais' ideal of the "natural

¹ Short History of French Literature, p. 186. Encyc. Brit. art. Rabelais, vol. xx., p. 196.

life" and the negation of all the restraints, moral and social, that he had learned to know and to hate in his monastic experience. A considerable part of the whole is occupied with Panurge's debate with himself and with Pantagruel as to whether he shall marry, his deliciously humorous recourse to all manner of authorities on this matter of universal interest, and his final determination to consult the oracle of the "Dive Bouteille" which, after various adventures that offer scope to unbridled satire, finally gives the truly oracular response, "Trinq" (drink), as the solution of this and all other riddles of earth.

Of the serious parts of Rabelais' work the best are probably the scattered chapters on the education of Pantagruel, which show great originality and force and a remarkable anticipation of the modern scientific spirit. But usually, however earnestly Rabelais may feel, his zealous optimism will find some grotesque mask for its expression. Of this comic vein the most striking feature is the unique and astounding vocabulary. He will pile up huge lists of cooks, or of fantastic meats, of dances and of games, or he will take some noun and heap around it all conceivable adjectives, sometimes arraying them by the hundreds in columns.¹ The reader is led through as devious paths as those of Tristram Shandy's autobiography. There is a psychological analysis of wonderful keenness, a profusion of learning, a carnival of wit and imagination, the loftiest thoughts and the vilest fancies, all woven together into a mighty maze by "pantagruelism", a militant faith in nature and instinct that by its robust humor and the solvent of its destructive satire becomes the extreme type of the pagan phase of the renaissance, the source of the eighteenth century ethics and of modern French realism.

For independence of all ascetic restraint is Rabelais' philosophy of life as it had been that of Jean de Meung and was to be that of Voltaire. But its inconsistency with medi-

¹ Books I. 22, V. 33, *bis*. Book iii. 26 has a list of 157 adjectives, and iii. 38 a list of 210.

æval christianity seems more obvious to us than it did to him, who remained all his life nominally and doubtless sincerely a Catholic, though to him the yoke was certainly lighter than to most who make a christian profession. Still there is nothing authentic in his work that can be construed into a direct attack on the faith. His position was like that of Erasmus. He was irreverent at times, but those who find an evidence of infidelity in this, or in his monumental filthiness of speech, are usually unacquainted with the common language of his contemporaries and predecessors of the ages of faith. Experience has shown that these things are less matters of morality than of taste and feeling, of age and race. Rabelais had more wit than the rest, and so did better what many tried to do. They have sunk in their mire to oblivion, but the impurity of Rabelais is like an unclean insect wrapped in amber. He must be judged by his time, and even at his coarsest it is always honest fun that inspires his rollicking laugh, never the prurient toying with voluptuousness and the sniggering of the eighteenth century professors of the science of erotics.

The world-wisdom of Rabelais was much that of Goethe. Both were men of vast learning. Goethe had a wider and more delicate culture. Rabelais had, what Goethe greatly lacked, a deeper humor than any other Frenchman, and one of the richest the world has ever known. So the expression of their common thought is radically different, but both believed in the worth of life and that that worth could be realized and enhanced by the freest development of the whole nature of man, unhampered by ascetic or other artificial trammels in ethics or philosophy. Yet it is the fate of the humorist that his humor should mask his more serious thought, and Rabelais, while he has been admired by many and imitated by a few, has not had the influence on the thought or the writing of later generations that might have been anticipated from his great genius.

But while Rabelais was thus mocking the inconsistent follies of mankind, a group of talented men whom the open-

hearted hospitality of Marguerite (1492-1549) had gathered at her court were developing by the introduction of tragic sympathy and artistic finish the traditions of the prose *fabliaux* so well inaugurated in the "Cent nouvelles nouvelles."¹ The year 1558 was made memorable by the publication of the "Heptameron" which sprang from the immediate circle of that royal lady, and by the "Joyeux devis" of des Périers, the only frank sceptic of his time, whose "Cymbalum mundi" earned him a persecution that drove him at last to suicide (1544). His work hardly marks an advance, except in style, on de la Salle. The anecdotes are short, crisp, witty, but with no trace of growing refinement or culture. The seventy-two tales of the "Heptameron", on the other hand, are epoch-making in the æsthetics of prose fiction, because they join to the joy of life that pulses with healthy vigor through all the early pagan renaissance, a refinement of manners and morals and a grace of conception that belongs rather to the humanists, and a delicacy of observation and description that is peculiarly its own.

Meantime the traditions of Rabelais were continued in the latter half of the century by the "Apologie pour Hérodoté" of the scholarly Henri Estienne,² a very amusing attack on the clergy of the time that did much to aid in fixing the classical language of the next century. Then, as a belated fruit of this epoch, there appeared in 1610 Beroald de Verville's "Moyen de parvenir", a curious mixture of wit, learning, and vulgarity, with a plenteous store of anecdotes that might have furnished him with another "Cent nouvelles" if he had not preferred to strew them in the freakish dialogue of his mad *fratrasie*. Between him and des Périers both in style and time, is the Abbé de Brantôme (1540-1614), ostensibly a writer of contemporary biography, but

¹ Nicholas de Troyes and Noel de Fail are still earlier imitators of de la Salle, but intrinsically of less importance.

² Otherwise known as Henry Stephens from his association with the English reformers in 1550. He was the most illustrious of a famous family of French scholars and printers. See Encyc. Brit. xxii. 534 sqq.

really a laughing collector of piquant and scandalous stories of the *dames de par le monde*, told with great gusto and considerable power of character painting, so that his works are reprinted and still read.

Prose satire first at this period became an important political weapon in the "Menippée", that several liberal and patriotic Catholics directed against the League and its desperate defense of Paris in 1593, while in his "Essays" Montaigne had already created a new type of prose writing that has gained little at the hands of his successors, for the inventor of the essay is still the most popular essayist.

The exuberant hopes of the pagan renaissance, as they appeared in the joyous nature worship of Rabelais, had not been fulfilled, and to that period of generous expansion there had succeeded a reaction to easy egoism and unaggressive scepticism. This is the temper in which Montaigne chooses the devices "How do I know?" and "What does it matter?" He had been a boy of scholarly and sedentary tastes and carefully trained in the classics. His manhood, though uneventful, was such as to bring him in contact with all phases of life, and his ripe experience has as its fruit the "Essays", of which two books appeared in 1580, and the more important third book in 1588. No French work has exercised so great and lasting an influence on the writing and thought of the world.¹ Montaigne here inaugurates the literature of the public confessional, of loquacious egotism. His "Essays" are indeed, as he says, "a book of good faith" He takes us into his confidence and rambles on in delicious, and not unmethodical, desultoriness. The essays sprang no doubt from such note books as scholarly men used to keep in that age, and gradually rounded themselves into their present form from a few connected thoughts. In the last series, however, there is far more conscious composition and these essays are nearly four times as long as the earlier ones. The subjects are very

¹ Montesquieu's *Spirit of Laws* had more influence on politics and Rousseau's novels on the feelings and life of two generations.

varied and the titles are often mere pegs to hang ideas upon. There is not much about Virgil nor even about Latin poetry in the essay on the "Verses of Virgil", and there is still less about coaches in "des Coches." Nowhere is there any trace of searching for subject or effect. He notes what comes into his mind, and as it comes. He tells us what he thinks about what happens to interest him. His work has all the charm of nature and not a little of hidden art.¹

In his style and vocabulary Montaigne profited by Ronsard, but he was no blind follower. He saw the danger of indiscriminate innovation. "Keen minds," he says, "bring no new words into the language, but with a cautious ingenuity they apply to it unaccustomed mutations. And," he adds in words that might apply as well to the symbolists of our day as to the *rhétoriciens* of his own, "how little it is in the power of all to do this appears in very many French writers of this century. They are bold enough and disdain to follow the beaten track. But lack of invention and of discretion ruins them. Their work reveals only a wretched affectation of singularity, with cold and absurd metaphors that amuse rather than elevate their subject. If only such men can gorge themselves with what is novel, they are indifferent to what is effective. To seize the new they will abandon the usual which is often the stronger and the more vigorous."

It cannot be denied that Montaigne's average prose is better than the average prose of Ronsard, and his best is almost the best that France has to show. Naturally, therefore, it was the subject of narrow criticism by Malherbe and the early Academicians. But while Balzac and Vaugelas fettered and puttered, and while Boileau taught the French muse to pick her cautious way along the strait and narrow path of his coldly objective classicism, while the Pleiad

¹ Montaigne was translated into English by Florio in time to be used by Shakspeare, and Florio has had many and distinguished successors. On Montaigne there is an essay in Emerson's "Representative Men" and two excellent books by Paul Stapfer, "Montaigne" in the *Grands écrivains français*, and "La Famille et les amis de Montaigne."

was discredited and Ronsard forgotten save by La Bruyère, the naturalists of the sixteenth century lived stubbornly on. Rabelais and Montaigne were still widely read, and their unfettered independence did much to shorten the triumph of literary absolutism, just as the tendency of their thought contributed to shorten the reign of political tyranny. It was not until wise rules had been broken together with cramping fetters by the Romantic revolt that Ronsard was restored to honor by precisely that movement in French literature with which he has least in common, but no revolution of taste or criticism has ever shaken the universal recognition of the greatness of Rabelais and Montaigne.

B. W. WELLS.

OUR FIRST NOVELIST.

Charles Brockden Brown was born in Philadelphia of Quaker parents, on the seventeenth of January, 1771, his ancestors coming over with William Penn. From his early years he showed a studious nature, and at the age of eleven he was placed in the school of Mr. Proud, in Philadelphia, under whose tutelage he studied Greek and Latin very successfully, and also did a large course of English reading. His bodily health was naturally delicate, which prevented his engaging in outdoor sports, and he quitted this school a little before he was sixteen. He had previously made some poetical attempts, sketching the outlines of three epics, on the discovery of America, and the conquests of Mexico and Peru, but no signs of these attempts are now extant. Like many another literary aspirant, he decided on the law as a profession, but spent every minute he could steal away from his graver studies in the pursuit of more agreeable literature. Naturally he became more and more opposed to entering upon the practice of his profession as the time of his graduation approached, so he tried to justify his retreat from it by drawing on his imagination, and claiming that the calling had something immoral in it. To his friends, this decision seemed to blight his whole future life. Shortly afterward he visited New York, and in 1798 he practically settled there, becoming a member of the Friendly Club, a congenial company, and seeming to be much exalted in spirit by his new surroundings, for in three years he published no fewer than six novels. In 1801 he returned to Philadelphia, three years later marrying Miss Elizabeth Linn, daughter of a noted Presbyterian minister of New York. In 1806 his health failed so rapidly that he was constrained to take several trips for its restoration, which took him through various parts of New York and New Jersey, and occupied a good part of the years 1807 and 1808. They seemed to benefit

him in no way, so a voyage to Europe was planned for the year 1810, but in the winter of 1809 he was confined to his bed, and on the tenth day of February, 1810, passed away. Such, in outline, was the uneventful life of the first American novelist.

Brown's novels, for the most part, possess chiefly an historical interest, from the fact that he was the first to write purely American fiction. He was the first to break away from the beaten paths followed by foreign writers, and to seek his characters and scenes in the unbroken wildernesses of the new world. He believed it to be the part of an American to use those "sources of amusement to the fancy and instruction to the heart that are peculiar to ourselves," and are, as he declared, "equally numerous and inexhaustible." He sought for truth in local color, and in the facts of science. This is shown especially in "*Edgar Huntley, or the Adventures of a Sleepwalker*," in which, to use his own words, he tried to "exhibit a series of adventures growing out of the conditions of our country, and connected with one of the most wonderful diseases or afflictions of the human frame." That he believed himself to be an innovator, may be seen from the following description of his "one merit—that of calling forth the passions and engaging the sympathy of the reader by means hitherto unemployed by preceding authors. Puerile superstitions and exploded manners, Gothic castles and chimeras are the materials usually employed for this end." He was going to deal with facts; to be, in short, a realist. But although he did not use the material spoken of in the preceding sentence, he used some means just as wildly imaginative. There is but little difference between the writings of Brown and those of acknowledged romanticists, for his novels are filled with flights of the wildest fancy and imagination. He differs from the British school in that he deals with American manners and customs. One critic has said that the heroines of Brown's writings differ from those of the old romance writers, only in the fact that they are a little more like sticks. While this

is hardly true, we should yet never recognize his characters as walking our streets, working our fields, or visiting our homes.

It is probable that Brown was somewhat influenced by Mrs. Radcliffe's writings, and it is well known that he was inspired by Godwin and Mary Wollstonecraft. It is not at all strange that he became a follower of Godwin, since he had been a philosopher from his earliest boyhood, as the following anecdote shows. A visitor once rebuked him, seemingly without cause, calling him "boy." After the offender had departed the insulted youngster remarked, "What does he mean by calling me 'boy?' Does he not know that it is neither size nor age, but sense, that makes the man? I could ask him an hundred questions, not one of which he could answer." As we have seen, he was devoted to study from an early age, his chief amusement being to plan unique ideal architectural designs, devised on an extensive and elaborate scale. Later, he formed Utopian projects for perfect commonwealths, and finally this developed into a series of novels "distinguished by the ingenuity and evolution of the plot." "*Carsol*," a youthful novel, which was not published till after its author's death, marks the transition between these intellectual phases and shows the influence of the writings of Godwin. This romance professes to depict an imaginary ideal community.

Brown's inquisitive and speculative mind partook of the widely prevailing scepticism which proceeded from the influence of the French Revolution. Some of his compositions, and especially "*Alcuin*," an essay on the rights of women, in which appears the influence of Mary Wollstonecraft, show to what extravagance a benevolent mind may be led by fastening too exclusively on the contemplation of the evils of existing institutions, and indulging in dreams of human perfection.

A short time after this a romance in the epistolary form was begun, but was never completed. In 1798 "*Wieland*" was published. The scene is laid in Pennsylvania. It is

the story of a man who thinks he is governed by the voice of the holy spirit, but it proves to be only a case of ventriloquism. Influenced by this occult cause, he first murders his wife, then his three children. Naturally the romance is full of blood-curdling scenes of the wildest fancy. It achieved instantaneous success, and the reputation of the first American novelist was made. "Wieland" was succeeded in 1799 by "Ormond." This story "designs to exhibit a model of surpassing loveliness, in a female rising superior to all shocks of adversity, and the more perilous blandishments of seduction, and who, as the scene grows darker around her, seems to illumine the whole with the radiance of her celestial virtues."

Shelley was greatly influenced by Brown's writings, and especially by Constantia Dudley, the heroine of this novel. "Nothing," Peacock tells us, "so blended itself with the structure of his interior mind as the creations of Brown." The appearance of these two novels, the first decidedly successful attempts in romantic fiction, constituted an epoch in the literary history of America. They illustrated remarkably the character and state of society on this side of the water, and this fact, together with the extraordinary powers of conception and execution displayed by their author, immediately recommended him to the notice of the literary world. Their philosophical methods of analyzing motive and passion, however, placed them beyond the range of vulgar popularity.

At the time of the yellow fever scourge in New York Brown was staying with a friend of his who was a doctor in that city, and as this friend could not leave his duties, Brown decided to remain and help him if need be, trusting to the healthfulness of the locality in which they lived. The physician was taken ill, however, and in spite of the tender care bestowed upon him by Brown, died. Shortly after this Brown himself was taken with the dread disease, but after a hard struggle, recovered. From this experience he evolved the plot for his next novel, "Arthur

Mervyn, or Memoirs of the year Seventeen Ninety-three." This was the fatal year of the plague in Philadelphia. He succeeded in giving awful distinctness to his scenes by relying upon his own experience. He does not, however, go into the loathsome symptoms of the disease, nor does he dwell upon the physical ravages, but selects the most striking moral circumstances which attend it. He is impressed by the "withering sensation that falls so heavily upon the heart in the streets of the once busy and crowded city, now deserted and silent save only where the wheels of the melancholy hearse are heard to rumble along the pavement."¹

In the same year in which "Arthur Mervyn" was issued, Brown began the publication of a periodical, *The Monthly Magazine and American Review*. This lasted for about a year. Not long after this he issued another novel, which we have already mentioned above, "Edgar Huntley." This, much more than his other works, was composed of wild and picturesque adventure and delineations of natural scenery. Here, too, appeared the first mention of the American Indian in fiction, the hero's path of adventure penetrating the same wild solitudes of the forest that have so often since been travelled by Cooper. In some respects Brown has been likened to Cooper, but they differ at least in this, that in delineations of character Brown searches the depths of the soul, while Cooper deals more closely with external features.

The incidents of Brown's plots are strung together with very little connection, but he was undoubtedly led into this defect by the haste of his composition. Three of his romances were completed in one year. One was begun before the other was finished, and all of them before a definite, well-formed plan was devised for their execution. His later novels were written more slowly. In 1801 "Clara Howard" was published, and in 1804 "Jane Talbot" appeared, the

¹ In 1800 the second part of "Arthur Mervyn" appeared, but did not achieve the popularity of his former works.

last of his novels. In these later works those startling supernatural incidents, which he used so freely in his earlier books, were discarded to a considerable extent. But he was still a man of many enterprises, and something of a rolling stone. In 1801 he left New York and returned to Philadelphia, where he began the publication of the *Literary Magazine and American Register*. The first number of the *Annual Register*, which he planned to edit in connection with the *Literary Magazine*, appeared in 1806, but his poor health prevented the further carrying out of this plan. With this his literary activity ended, for the following year his health failed so rapidly that everything was given up in order to try to regain it.

Brown's appetite for literature was immense, but his reading was careless and desultory. He collected a great deal of general information in this way, all of which was needed to supply the outpouring of his mind in its many and varying channels. That he had a steady application in creative labor is shown by the large number of his works. In little more than ten years he published twenty-four printed volumes, besides many pamphlets and anonymous contributions.

In marked contrast to the general simplicity of his taste and the evident rapidity of his composition, Brown has an elaborate, factitious style. Influenced by Godwin, he forced himself to write with unnatural vigor and condensation, resorting to pedantic epithets and elliptical forms of expression at the expense of simplicity and nature. But although he thus avails himself of every opportunity of telling the truth as he sees it in a roundabout way, there yet are many passages of undeniable eloquence and rhetorical beauty to be found scattered through his writings. As to his matter and thought, it is but natural that work done between the ages of twenty and thirty, should show to some extent the effects of maturity, but it is probable that a longer experience would have corrected such faults. It is impossible to predict what he might have been. Some have said that he is greater

than Cooper, but with this verdict the mass of readers has not agreed and is not likely to agree. Others have even claimed that he surpasses Hawthorne, but this is a bizarre judgment, for surely he never approximated the sublimity of thought and theme that Hawthorne achieved. But although we cannot say that he is the greatest American novelist, we can yet give him praise that is high enough for any man; he was the first in the field, the first native novelist to write American novels, the first to write of American scenery, of American customs, and American character. He was the founder of American romantic literature, and his name should be held in the highest honor by all Americans who are interested in their country's literature.

JO. S. MCCOWAN.

MATTHEW ARNOLD'S LETTERS.¹

The long promised collection of Matthew Arnold's letters has at last come to hand, and it is safe to say that few of the many readers who have been expecting it have been on the whole disappointed. The letters are so perfectly simple and genuine that they must be read with pleasure by all who like simple and genuine people and things, and we will charitably suppose that a majority of readers belong to this category. How these readers will like the fact that the letters are not numbered, that there is no index, and not even a table of contents, we cannot pretend to say; but we are sure for our part we could have put up with a less delightful format than that to which the *Eversley* series has accustomed us, if only the publishers had considered the needs of those who are likely to use these comely volumes for frequent reference. But Matthew Arnold's works in general have been long crying for an index, and it was perhaps too much to expect that his letters would get one. Still having now given our American soul a vent for its wrath (the English do not seem to demand indexes as we do) we may congratulate the editor on the modest and competent way he has done his work, and may pass to a direct consideration of the letters themselves.

They are mainly family letters, addressed chiefly to Arnold's mother, his wife, his two sisters, Mrs. W. E. Forster and Miss Arnold of Fox How, and later on to his two daughters. Other relatives were occasionally favored, and there are not a few letters and notes to Lady de Rothschild and a French Protestant, a M. Fontanès, of whom Arnold seems to have grown very fond. Here and there is a note to John Morley, Charles Eliot Norton, and Sir M. E. Grant-

¹*Letters of Matthew Arnold 1848-1888 collected and arranged by George W. E. Russell. New York and London: Macmillan & Co., 1895; 2 vols., 8vo, pp. xi., 467, 442.*

Duff, but as a rule the contents of the two volumes are, as we said, family letters of a simple and unaffected sort. They are not written in Arnold's best prose style and perhaps gain by the fact of their evident unpremeditation, although here and there one can see traces of hurry and is rather jolted by uneven sentences. Simply as letters they cannot in our opinion compare with FitzGerald's for vivacity or charm. There is seldom a gleam of humor, seldom an important idea that has not been exploited and better done by the writer elsewhere; there is a little too much about money and cooking and, we regret to show our philistinism, about botanizing. But, and this is the main point, the letters bring us near in many ways to the actual man, Matthew Arnold, who has made for himself such a place in his country's literature and in the hearts of many of us that these letters cannot be ignored by any who would thoroughly understand one of the rarest and most enlightened spirits of our century.

Better still, Arnold's letters throw light on Arnold the poet, rather than on Arnold the critic, and it is as a poet that he is looming up and seems destined to live. The position assigned him in the new edition of the fourth volume of Ward's *Poets* and in Professor Walker's monograph on "The Greater Victorian Poets" may be cited as confirmatory of this last proposition; but that Arnold had the true poetic nature would be inferred from his letters by a reader who had never seen a line of his poetry. A more genuine love of nature than that displayed in these letters would be hard to conceive of. No matter whom of his intimates he is writing to or where he may be writing from, he cannot refrain from describing every landscape that has impressed him, every flower he has stopped to pluck. It makes little difference whether he is travelling in Italy or going his weary round as a school inspector through rural England, always and everywhere it is nature that fascinates him and calms him and consoles him. He had told us this nobly in his poetry, but it is pleasant to find it out for ourselves from

his letters where he is not thinking of telling us anything. Then, too, the letters often throw a welcome light on some particular passage in the poems — as for example on the beautiful picture of the English garden “on some tempestuous day in early June” which fills a stanza of “Thyrsis.” It is a sadder light that is thrown on the evolution of that beautiful elegy “A Southern Night” but no one who has read this poem will wish a word away from the touching letter Arnold wrote his mother on the death of his gifted and ill-fated brother. Certainly for the future students of Arnold’s poetry, and they will be many, there will be no more fruitful source of information than these two volumes, for the conversation of the poet himself about his own work, which is said to have been charming, is hardly to be reproduced.

As we have intimated Arnold the critic is not as well represented in his letters as we could have wished. In his essays he had been very careful to avoid criticism of his great contemporaries like Tennyson and Browning, and we had hoped that these volumes would make up for his former reticence. They do not, however, although we can gather a few cursory judgments. He evidently did not think Tennyson a poet of the first rank, and he had no excessive admiration for Mr. Swinburne despite the hearty praise his own verses got from the latter. For Browning the man he evidently had a great regard and rated his poetry above that of his wife, but exactly how high we are left to conjecture. For Carlyle and Ruskin, too, his admiration was qualified, and the lesser lights get hardly a mention. Perhaps it is as well that this is so, for more than one critic has had his sound judgments passed on men and books and events of former generations discounted because of his faulty judgments passed upon contemporaries. Yet Arnold in matters of religion and politics had little hesitation in criticising his contemporaries, and did it in a way to make some people suspect that he had little sympathy with his fellow men. This notion is, however, completely upset by the present

correspondence, and Arnold's essentially kind and loving nature is brought into full relief. He was not merely the gentlest of parents and sons, but a true and tender friend and a genial and amiable acquaintance. The school children and teachers whom he inspected were devoted to him, which is a crowning proof of his fine character, for the work of inspecting weighed heavily upon him and would never have been kept up but for his comparative poverty. That one of the most delicate geniuses of modern times should have been compelled to drudge for a living and to attribute his failure to write more poetry to his lack of means and time, is a piece of that irony to which Fate is always treating us.

A recent reviewer has described the volumes before us as the letters of a scholar and not of a man of the world like Lowell. Nothing could be further from the truth. Arnold was not a scholar in either a broad or a narrow sense of the term, nor was he, as far as these letters can be taken as evidence, a man of extraordinarily wide reading. He was an admirable critic, however, and knew what to read and how to read it, for the critical faculty is the judging faculty. Hence a dictum of Arnold's need not always be based on very wide reading to be profoundly true. Then again Arnold was, as these letters show, far more of a man of the world than might have been inferred from his other writings. His constant rounds of school inspection brought him in contact with all classes of people and interested him immensely in public questions, about which indeed he did not a little writing. He was continually in society, too, and met the best people of his time. He was a fairly travelled man and acquainted with various phases of foreign thought. He liked to have social attentions paid him, and to be received cordially, as he was, by the nobility and by royalty itself. Indeed, if anything, there was a weakness in his character just here, and these letters bring it to light. Arnold was not an entirely whole-hearted man of letters, and it would have been better for posterity, perhaps, if he

had been. For he is essentially a lyrical poet, not epic or dramatic, and a more or less self-centred life might have stimulated the peculiar bent of his genius. Be this as it may, he was in many senses a man of the world, though it is doubtful whether he had enough humor in his composition (he had plenty of wit) to make a thoroughly successful combination of the man of letters and affairs like Lowell. He certainly was not a typical Englishman any more than he was a complete cosmopolitan, yet it is to be noted that he liked to shoot, though he did it badly, that he was a good fisherman and a fair mountain climber, which are facts that some people may be surprised to learn. To learn them, however, not only brings us nearer to Arnold the man, but lets us see that his poetry rests on a fund of genuine and lovable human nature and not on a fund of intellect improved by culture. For such knowledge we can easily forego our idea of Arnold as the almost unerring critic of books and men, an idea which is somewhat rudely shaken by some of his utterances apropos of our civil war, by his comparative failure to appreciate Gladstone, and by his surprising inability to detect a charlatan in the late Lord Randolph Churchill. But it is time to make a few quotations from the letters themselves before finally recommending them to the attention of all our readers.

That many of his most characteristic ideas were early formed is proved by the following sentences taken from a letter of 1848: "I see a wave of more than *American* vulgarity, moral, intellectual, and social, preparing to break over us. In a few years people will understand better why the French are the most civilized of European peoples, when they see how fictitious our manners and civility have been, how little inbred in the race."

Here is a little touch of his experience as a travelling inspector: "I write this very late at night, with S—, a young Derby banker, *très sport*, completing an orgy in the next room. When that good young man is calm, these lodgings are pleasant enough. You are to come and see

me fighting the battle of life as an Inspector of Schools some day. . . . S—— is in a state of collapse. He will be very miserable to-morrow."

This time he was in the mild lark: "We had a capital dinner, champagne and claret, and after dinner Henry and I played picquet, 6d. a game, the *parti* ending in my being the winner of one sixpence. We did not go to bed till one o'clock."

Here is a sentence that might have drawn from Browning a worse outburst than the one he vented on FitzGerald, had he only lived to read it: "Make Browning look at it, [i. e. at Arnold's "Merope"] if he is at Florence; one of the very best antique fragments I know is a fragment of a Hippolytus by him. As to his wife, I regard her as hopelessly insane in her aberration from health, nature, beauty, and truth." As we have said Browning is no longer here to get a rise from, but Mr. Swinburne has not lost his vocabulary of invective, and there is no saying what he may not give vent to when he finds himself referred to as a "Pseudo-Shelley."

Mr. Swinburne, however, could hardly quarrel with the following: "The bad feature . . . is the hideous English toadyism with which lords and great people are invested with the commands in the corps they join, quite without respect of any considerations of their efficiency. This proceeds from our national bane—the immense vulgar-mindedness, and, so far, real inferiority of the English middle classes."

Perhaps some of our modern American historians might take a useful hint from the following: "Stubbs's book [his *Constitutional History of England*] is a sound and substantial one, but rather overpraised by a certain school here, the school of Mr. Freeman, of whom Stubbs is a disciple. This school has done much to explore our early history and to throw light on the beginnings of our system of government and of our liberty; but they have not had a single man of genius, with the *étincelle* and the instinctive good sense and

moderation which make a guide really attaching and useful. Freeman is an ardent, learned, and honest man, but he is a ferocious pedant, and Stubbs, though not ferocious, is not without his dash of pedantry."

Here are a few sentences from a letter written in Richmond, Virginia, December 19, 1883, the farthest point South that he reached in either of his visits to America: "Imagine my delight after the poverty of New England winter vegetation, of which you can form no idea,—not a laurel, not a holly—to find the magnolia growing, a standard tree, in the gardens before the Richmond houses. There was the horse-chestnut, too, which I have never seen in the North, and fine planes. . . . But my great pleasure was the cemetery, where is a great pyramid over the common soldiers of the Confederate Army who fell in the war; but the beauty of the garden [*sic*] is in its dells and trees, such magnolias, such red-berried hollies, such oaks! It was dark when we got home, but I found callers, and then dressed with a good fire in my room, which even here one is glad of. There was a party at dinner, the cloth drawn after dinner in the old English fashion, and excellent Madeira; then we went to the lecture in a tumble-down old hall, but it did very well, as I was sure it would. My agents were against my coming here, and said I would have no audience, but I had all the 'old families', who in general do not go to lectures; one gentleman came in twenty miles on an engine to hear me. . . . We came back here, and I went to bed *after hearing much about the war.*" [*Italics are our own.*] Another letter concludes: "I wish I could have gone deeper into the South. If I ever come back to America, it will be to see more of the South."

Here is something about his habits of reading which we should all take to heart: "I am glad to find that in the past year I have at least accomplished more than usual in the way of reading the books which at the beginning of the year I had put down to be read. I always do this, and I do not expect to read all I put down, but sometimes I fall much

too short of what I proposed, and this year things have been a good deal better. The importance of reading, not slight stuff to get through the time, but the best that has been written, forces itself upon me more and more every year I live; it is living in good company, the best company, and people are generally quite keen enough or too keen about doing that, yet they will not do it in the simplest and most innocent manner by reading. However, if I live to be eighty I shall probably be the only person left in England who reads anything but newspapers and scientific publications."

This is a little too gloomy. He would have been seventy-three if he had lived to see these letters published and it is quite certain that many of his countrymen will lay down their favorite *Times* (which he once described as blundering on in its usual intrepid fashion) to read and enjoy them. It is equally certain that we could go on picking out entertaining paragraphs from them, but we shall refrain. We have purposely quoted nothing from the more personal of the letters because we feel that such matters as his reverence for his father's memory, his devotion to his mother, his exquisite fondness for his wife and children are not to be re-tailed piecemeal here, but are to be sympathetically read in their proper sequence in this semi-autobiography which is the only authorized life we are likely to have of the most distinguished, if not the greatest, English man of letters of our day.

PHILO-ARMINIUS.

THE NESTOR OF HUNGARIAN LETTERS.

Any sincere self-revelation of a man in his older years is worthy the reading. There is a rich coloring borrowed from the mellow ripeness of his mature vision; the asperities of time seem to become softened, and memories cluster with a holier nimbus surrounding them.

Particularly are the records of such a life interesting, when it has formed a directing thread in the complexity of that weaving, which we designate a nation's history. Others, and they are no less, but even more, interesting, far from telling of outward stir and the confused bustle of action, convey deeper lessons of spiritual experience and aspiring effort. If there be still added the grace and charm of literary expression, the rare occasion is attained when the man of letters is writing of that which concerns himself most and which is closest to his thought and heart. It is a happy coalition, indeed, when we find, in anyone, something like a union of all three; and it is just this something of all these impressions combined that we derive from a perusal of Maurus Jókai's autobiographic novel, "*Eyes Like the Sea*."¹

Nor is it an isolated case that fiction serves as a loose-fitting garb for autobiographic details. Dickens and Thackeray both have read much of their own life's experience into their books; and this is especially true of Goethe's "*Wilhelm Meister*." Truth and poetry are frequently indistinguishable nor do we care to separate them strictly in turning the leaves in any relation of spiritual truth. We know that the pages are true — contain the truth of thought and of feeling, if not of detail and of incident. There is the higher poetic truth, the creatively inspiring imaginative truth, which tells us, without the need of any vouchers, that

¹ *Eyes Like the Sea*, a Novel. By Maurus Jókai. Translated from the Hungarian by R. Nisbet Bain. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1894.

all is true, if we may quote Balzac, though in a different sense, in his opening pages to *Le Père Goriot*.

Hungary and Hungarian letters are comparatively little known to us far away Americans; besides, the Hungarian is almost the one language in Europe that Aryans are in close touch with, and yet which belongs to the Asiatic group. Translations are the best that most of us can hope for, and it is, alas! too infrequent that a translation of any foreign book is really good, and that the book itself possesses a genuine interest. Let us thank, then, Mr. Nisbet Bain, the translator, for giving us a most readable book in point of style, possessing a brightness and a vivacity which must have caught much of its charm from the rich qualities of the original.

It will probably excite no surprise that we may find the most conflicting statements respecting the author published in our Sunday newspapers, our highly respectable weeklies, and our monthly magazines by would-be-well-informed ones who apparently (as is befitting the modern journalistic spirit) know everything about everybody. In nearly all,—and with a little search, one can find a deluge of material in random columns—there is a delightful contradiction among these self-constituted authorities, and the most heterodox opinions expressed as to almost every question of fact. At length, in the pages of the August *Forum*, the author himself was invited to set at rest many vagaries by frankly fixing some necessary points, and reducing a few dates, from movable feasts, to an appointed calendar. But the fault here again is that there is too much matter of fact; and the author, in being pilloried before the public gaze and forced to give an account of himself in open court, after our American forensic manner, is so much less entertaining and delightful than in his bit of historic fiction, that we ask no excuse in ignoring this supplementary evidence, and in remanding the case to the lower court, where he may speak for himself and tell just what he pleases and how, in the pages of his own story. We shall not be greatly bothered

about ignorance of details, for no perusal can leave any doubt of truthfulness as to the spirit. It is in the pages of the book before us, crowned in 1890 by the Hungarian Academy as the best book of the year in the Magyar tongue, that we can best read the story of the author's life and the contemporary struggles of the Hungarian nation.

Maurus Jókai is Hungarian above everything, and while near to the councils of his country and loyal to his Emperor and Empress, he is national, but not Austrian in any other sense. Buda-Pest — dear Buda, as their capital on the lower Danube is known — and not the imperial city Vienna, has been his residence and is always his love. That Hungary had produced musicians, we knew already. There was Franz Liszt, a king of the pianoforte and the leader of a school. The Hungarian Rhapsody constitutes a specific musical genus. Joachim, the violinist, in point of birth at least, is Hungarian; as was Reményi. Hungarian dances, Hungarian music, Hungarian orchestras, are a common enough form of advertisement in foreign and in cis-atlantic capitals.

Hungarian letters are less known, and in the person of Jókai we are told that we get acquainted with the best in Hungarian literature. And literature is here taken in no narrow sense; for he has excelled in nearly all its branches — in poetry, history, drama, and the novel, not to speak of years spent in actively inspiring journalistic work. But Jókai is even more than a writer; he is the type of a newly great and aspiring nation. He was one of the patriots of the Revolution of 1848, that gave Hungary position as an integral part of the Austro-Hungarian empire, and although now an old man, he is yet a virile figure. He participated in the Kossuth struggles, and has outlived the martyr-patriot. Indeed, his impress on the Hungarian mind has been, in some respects, doubtless, even greater than that of the famous Dictator, for, in the number and continuity and varied character of his works, he has been called the *voice* of Modern Hungary. It is chiefly through his writings, political,

satirical, humorous, historic, poetic, dramatic, and romantic, that the aspirations of the Magyar folk have found expression and thus become promulgated to the world. No achievement, no disaster, no hope, no sorrow, in the life of Hungary since its new birth, that has not been voiced somewhere in his varied production. Thousands who could not read his books, it is claimed, have learned by heart his songs, and have thus come to feel their country's hopes and possibilities. It is not strange, then, that his literary position has been compared to that of Victor Hugo and Dumas *père* in France, and to the place long kept in British hearts and in the development of the English novel by good Sir Walter. And again, like another poet-patriot of another nation, Schiller, Jókai's youth was characterized by storm and stress, and he exposed zealously, and even foolishly, a life for those three words that have often proved the touchstone of both the rarest nobility and the direst madness, Liberty, Fraternity, Equality.

Two years ago, on January 6, 1894, his country celebrated his literary jubilee—the fiftieth anniversary of his first scarcely recognized poetic drama—marking the turn of a half century in his career as peculiarly the national voice of Hungary and the Magyar folk. They hold more account of anniversaries, generally, everywhere in Europe than we do, and a jubilee is particularly sacred. The jubilee of a great writer, a great teacher, a great figure in any sphere, is a splendid occasion. It is his public and professional Golden Wedding, celebrating the life-long union with his mistress, muse, or goddess, as the case may be, *Scientia*, *Politica*, or *Litteræ*.

Some of the circumstances attending Jókai's jubilee were touching in the extreme, and well sufficed to make the old man feel it is enough of life to live. For it was a jubilee of the nation, a celebration of their national greatness, and every class in society, from the throne to the peasant, had some part in it. There were processions and floral emblems, orations and odes, dinners and drinkings;

but the special literary feature was an *édition de luxe* of Jókai's collected works. Something like a hundred dollars a set was the price fixed, and the average Hungarian is not rich, yet the demand reached easily, it is said, a thousand copies. The profits were to go to Jókai himself, and it is estimated that he received \$50,000 as his share, a noble tribute and a splendid gift to the writer, who is by no means wealthy. To subscribe became a matter of national dignity. The list was headed by Elizabeth, Queen of Hungary and Empress of Austria (who is claimed as a life-long friend and admirer of the poet) and by the widow of the late Crown Prince Rudolph. There were numerous Archdukes and Archduchesses (for these are very plentiful in Austria-Hungary) on the list, also ministers of state and quondam dignitaries, among others Cardinal Vaszary and Count Kalnoky. And the blessed school children and the poorer people combined and together made up the requisite sums to receive sets as their joint property. Far more, herein lies the undying and divine voice of the national heart, and the writer's real vindication for future fame. "Illustrious personages pass away and vanish," he is reported as having declared, "but the people never die."

From various sources we glean that he was born in 1825. He himself says, in his story, that he was twenty-four when the Revolution of 1848 broke out. His birth-place was Komorn or Komárom. His father was a lawyer ("advocate" is the common European term for this species) and he was of a good and ancient family, the final "i" in the name having somewhat the same value as *de* in French and *von* in German. The family were strict Calvinists, and it surprises one at first to know of so intense a Calvinistic population in the heart of the natural territory of the Roman Church. These two forms of religious creed and dogma—Calvinist and Romanist—the author is perfectly familiar with and equally tolerant of, in the present volume. For himself he is apparently too national in spirit to be illiberal.

Literary genius usually buds early, especially when

planted and watered, as Jókai's ever fruitful tree has been. His first poem, we are gravely told, was composed at the age of six. It is hardly in the collected works; however, it actually got published somehow, filling a corner, conveniently, of an Hungarian weekly newspaper; and, we believe, some one, in a fit of questionable zeal, has recently fished it out for exposure. His first novel was certainly written at seventeen while at school, and its very title, "Ordeal," indicated the influences the youthful imagination was working under. This was, naturally, not only more mature, but more ambitious, than the poem, and was given a prize by the students and professors of the Lyceum. After essaying lyric poetry and the novel, the next flight of fluttering literary genius, if it thrives in a continental country, is with the drama. This our author attempts in poetic dress, producing the dramatic poem, "The Hebrew Boy," or "The Jew Son," or "The Infant Jew," as one may find it variously referred to in translation. It seems to have been the date of this production, January 6, 1844, (for one must begin somewhere) that was celebrated in the author's jubilee. Since he had won a prize at school, the drama was placed in competition for more worthy laurels, the prize offered by the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (for thus they stimulate original production abroad in "effete monarchies") for the best dramatic work of real literary merit. Jókai's effort failed to secure the prize, but he received at least an "honorable mention," and thus stimulated, began the long career in letters which, with all diversions, was to prove his real profession.

These early days — the days of his youth — are told delightfully in reminiscence in the first pages of "Eyes Like the Sea." As a true poet, he was susceptible, of course, to the charms of young women, and it is scarcely necessary to explain that it was one of these who possessed the "Eyes Like the Sea;" nor is it further necessary to say that it is not of the lady he afterwards married that he speaks thus.

The young man enjoyed the very process of living; it

was a pleasure to him, as were all life's little amenities. Fresh, bright glimpses of Hungarian customs and manners are common enough in his pages. We all know of the Hungarian waltzes and the Hungarian dances, even if some of us have not made a failure at one time or another in attempting them. Jókai would have us believe that the good old days were far better than the present. We catch his very enthusiasm!

"Now, the waltzes of those days were very different from the waltzes we dance now. The waltz of to-day is a mere joke; but waltzing then was a serious business. Both partners kept the upper parts of their bodies as far apart as possible, whilst their feet were planted close together. Then the upper parts went moving off to the same time, and the legs were obliged to slide as quickly as they could after the flying bodies. It was a dance worthy of will-o'-the-wisps."

It is in one of these whiskings away that he falls under the spell of the "Eyes Like the Sea." To save his partner from tumbling, he falls on his knees. The rest of the episode can be told only in quotation.

"I split my pantaloons just above the knee. I was annihilated. A greater blow than that can befall no man.

"Bessy laughed at my desperate situation, but the next moment she had compassion upon me.

"'Wait a bit,' said she, 'and I'll sew it up with my darning needle.' . . . In her great haste she pricked me to the very quick with the beneficent but dangerous implement.

"'I didn't prick you, did I?' she asked, looking at me with those large eyes of hers which seemed to speak of such goodness of heart.

"'No,' I said, yet I felt the prick of that needle even then.

"Then we went on dancing. I distinguished myself marvelously. With a needle prick in my knees, and another who knows where, I whirled Bessy three times round the room, so that when I brought her back to the *garde des dames*, it seemed to me as if three and thirty mothers, aunts, and companions were revolving around me."

This is the spirit throughout the book that stirs our blood and makes us live and love with him.

He was pretending to study law meanwhile, and had determined to follow the profession of his father; but it was very evident that he had at this time another mistress far more jealous than either law or the pursuit of letters. Even his dramatic success ranked only second after an opportunity to be dancing with some charmer like this young lady with the wonderful eyes. The incident already related occurred at the dancing school of M. Galifard.

"I am really most grateful to Monsieur Galifard. I have to thank him for the first distinction I ever enjoyed in my life. This was the never-to-be-forgotten circumstance that when my colleagues, the young hopefuls of the Academy of Jurisprudence at Kecskemet, gave a lawyers' ball, they unanimously chose me to be the *elötánczos* (leader). To this day I am proud of that distinction; what must I have been then? On the heels of this honor speedily came a second. The very same year the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, on the occasion of the competition for the Teleki prize, honorably mentioned my tragedy, 'The Jew Boy,' and there were even two competent judges, Vörösmarty and Bajza, (they were the names of two of the best known contemporary Hungarian writers and poets) who considered it worthy of the prize. . . . When, therefore, I returned to my native town, after an absence of three years, I found that a certain *renommée* had preceded me. I had also very good reasons for returning home. The legal curriculum in my time embraced four years. The third year was given to the *patveria* the fourth year to the *jurateria* (terms denoting different branches of the Hungarian law). Every respectable man goes through the *patveria* in his own country, but the *jurateria* at Buda-Pest." From this we see, and indeed from his later journalistic and legislative performances, that it was a very respectable training in legal principles which he must have had, nevertheless.

He tells further of himself with a somewhat charming air of egotism:

"And I had something else to boast of, too. In my leisure hours I painted portraits, miniatures in oil. So well did I hit off the judge of Osziny (and he did not give me a sitting either) that everyone recognized him; but a still greater sensation was caused by my portrait of the Procurator Fiscal, who passed for one of the prettiest women in town." Of course, this last touch had to be added.

Appreciation of the truest principles of one art lies very close to that of another, and many in our day and of our own tongue have pursued both, not to disadvantage. Had not law and letters and life and love — the four great l's alliterating so allusively to the imagination of the average college-bred young man — so deeply absorbed his attention it seems possible that he might have gained some note, too, as an artist.

The high animal spirits proceed:

"And yet, despite all this, when in the following Shrovetide, the Lord Lieutenant gave a ball to the county (they were something like Lord Lieutenants in those days), I was *not* called upon to open the ball! Ungrateful Fatherland!" And then comes the passion of still another Hungarian dance: "Ah! that *körmagyar*. That is something like a dance. It requires enthusiasm to dance *that*."

These pictures of light-hearted youth — and they give a fair example of the easy and allusive style so well adapted for reminiscence — are not without their charm and fascination. The same darning needle played chief rôle in another episode equally dramatic. The "Eyes Like the Sea" had detected a wart on his right hand just below the thumb, and above the artery, which she promised to rid him of.

"It will smart dreadfully. But if a girl can stand it, you can," she said, and then proceeded to torture him by calcing it with the needle red hot. "It is thus that the demons of hell must look upon those whom they are roasting! 'Does it hurt?' she hissed between her teeth. She appeared to be in a state of ecstatic delight. 'It hurts, but it is not the needle.'"

It is not often that an author gives glimpses into the privacy of his workshop and shows us, so far as it can be shown, the secret of his art. Jókai is as confiding at times as Thackeray, though with a difference, and makes a friend of his readers, for he has come to know they are his friends and he doesn't mind telling them things in confidence. Incidentally an almost exaggerated wealth in figure and color is disclosed.

"Working and walking at the same time?" the Eyes ask. "'Such is my habit. I work out the whole scene in my head first of all, down to the smallest details, so that when I sit down, it is a mere mechanical a-b-c sort of business.'

"Then, according to that, when you are marching with rapid strides up and down that long path, you neither hear nor see anything?'

"Pardon me, I see grass, trees, flowers, birds, stumps of trees, and huts of reeds overgrown with brambles. Amongst all these I weave my thoughts like the meshes of a spider's web. And I hear, too. I hear the piping of the yellow-hammer, the twittering of the titmouse, the notes of the horn from distant ships, the humming of the gnats, and they all have something to whisper to me, something to tell me. A buzzing wasp lends wings to my imagination; but if I meet a human face, the whole thing flies out of my thoughts, and a single 'your humble servant' will dissolve utterly my *fata Morgana*, until I turn back and reconstruct the ends of my spider's web among the freshly-discovered reed-built huts, tree-trunks, and trailing flowers, when the well-known voices of the dwellers in the wilderness bring back to me again my scattered ideas; then I retreat into the little wooden summer-house in our garden, and there, disturbed by nobody, I transfer to paper the images which stand before my mind.'"

It was in this little summer-house that the first romance was written, which he confesses he loved "just as much as a man loves his first-born, though it may be deformed by all

sorts of spiritual and physical defects." Where is the young bird that does not like to feel its wings and soar? and where is the newly-fledged author who does not delight in reading aloud his own creations? Great aspirations were those flaming in the heart of the youth, aspiring to pull down some of the leaves of Apollo's laurels for his own brow. The young mind, in full belief of future entrance upon its kingdom, despises ordinary values. Only images of pure gold flit before the eyes, and the jewels of the imagination are all pearls of great price.

The young man might have remained fascinated and absorbed and made incapable of all serious effort had it not been for an opportune bit of ridicule. The extreme sensitiveness to shame and laughter occupies a prominent place in others of Jókai's works — can it be a special Hungarian mark? It was only by a break with all the attractions of this delightful and alluring provincial society, a break effected by his sweet, gentle, sensible mother, that he resolved within twenty-four hours to take the first boat to Buda-Pest, and was on his way.

Jókai speaks of his mother very feelingly and tenderly — of her love, her care, above all of her wisdom. It was chiefly to her, as we have just said, that this sudden tearing away from the seductive influences of his native town occurred and that he passed out to the capital city and into the great world. It is very often the little things that affect human lives most deeply. It was a small thing for a bit of pride to strive with mocking laughter, but it removed him from the atmosphere of a provincial town and introduced him to the large city which was to be the future theatre of his literary work. His promise and career were no longer to be locked up in a retired corner, but were to become national.

Yet he was not destined to a legal career. He was licensed to practise law, it is true, but he turned at once with unerring instinct to journalism, and has written industriously, in one form or another (probably even too much, some-

times) ever since. This was before his twentieth year, and the jubilee was before his seventieth. How industrious a man can be and how much work one can do in fifty years is seen by his output. "Three hundred and fifty volumes, bound, according to the caprice of the publisher, in a variety of sizes, constitute the first complete edition of my works," he says in his *Forum* article, thus making an average of seven volumes a year, not to count a good deal of more or less journalistic hack-work. And yet he had time, besides, to be a lawyer, nominally, to become editor of numerous papers, to be a parliamentarian, to engage in a Revolution, to be banished, to be condemned to death, and to indulge in a number of similar *passetemps*.

Of Jókai's large number of works (most of which are novelettes and novels, besides a half dozen dramas) comparatively few have been done into English. German is the one western language into which nearly all have been rendered, naturally from the relations of Hungary to the Austrian empire and its capital Vienna; though the author has been honored by translation in part into at least a dozen tongues. The translator of the present volume modestly confesses that he has read only twenty-five out of Jókai's one hundred and fifty novels. Incidentally, it may be said that perhaps the best known in English, apart from the present volume, is "Timar's Two Worlds," recently published by Messrs. Appleton & Co.—a strong story of a double life, of strength and of weakness, of honor and of crime. "In Love with the Czarina" is a collection of short sketches, mainly historical, gotten out by an English house. Finally, the Cassell's Sunshine Series of novels contains several; as, for instance, "There is no Devil;" but these are in such a form that the reader cannot be quite sure as to the accuracy and aptness of the translation, or the extent to which excision has been applied and a heightening of effect introduced for the sake of sheer sensationalism, and to satisfy a flagrantly lurid imagination.

For Jókai is not averse here and there to startling his readers by a picture or an idea or a suggestion; it is one of his frequent effects. He can expose with a few words some conventionality and tear away, upon occasion, the flimsy covering of propriety, and now and then it takes a strong pair of eyes to stand the bright light without blinking.

It was in Buda-Pest that Jókai had full bent for his literary genius. He was already considered worthy of notice by some of the most prominent Hungarian writers of the time; he claimed, in fact, an intimacy with more than one. The poet, Alexander Petöfi, author of "*Talpra Magyar*" (To arms! ye men of Hungary) and beloved everywhere in the kingdom as the Hungarian Robert Burns,¹ was a former schoolmate of Jókai's. The two friends fostered kindred sentiments and aspirations, both for the freedom of their native land and for the high purposes of art, and their conversations on these subjects became long and earnest. Petöfi was the older, in the season of his renown, and lent encouragement to Jókai's efforts, giving him what he needed so much, the practical common-sense advice of a man of the world. On one visit, which our author describes, Petöfi took out of his host's hands the manuscript of "*Every-day Days*" (one of Jókai's earlier works which its author was in doubt how to dispose of) turned over the leaves and read the headings of the chapters. "That was an original idea of yours, I must say, to choose mottoes from popular ballads for your chapter headings. I'll take this with me to Pest and get it published," was the friend's final comment. At the same time he counted out twenty-seven silver florins as the price of early attempts he had succeeded in selling for his friend to the publishers. It was Jókai's first literary return, and he tells us that he felt he was a Rothschild. And thus the fateful compact with the muse of letters was subscribed to and sealed.

It was Petöfi's advice, too, that led him to give up competing for the Academy prize for which he had once been

¹ So designated, as well as translated, by Sir John Bowring.

defeated, and to write pieces directly for acceptance by the theatre, and most of all, to get to Buda-Pest as soon as possible. This was the advice he had now followed, and Petöfi's was the society to which he naturally gravitated. His drifting towards journalism was equally inevitable, and in his vain strivings, at first, to get something to do, he admits, jocularly enough now, that he even came perilously near being a critic. From the company he kept in Buda-Pest, and by his natural inclinations, the gifted, impetuous, young man was plunged into politics, and with politics there insinuated themselves gradually dreams of freedom for his beloved country. He had previously been a member of a philanthropic society, indulging in schemes for the amelioration and freedom of those condemned for life to penal servitude. An enthusiastic band of young literary men are most susceptible to just these influences, and can very easily sacrifice themselves on the altars kindled with such fires. It was the year 1848, the age of revolutions, and the flames breaking out in the streets of Paris, spread themselves in every European state. It was in 1848 that Prussia received the basis of its present constitution. It was in 1848 that Hungary took steps which later led to its recognition as a separate kingdom and an integral part of an empire formed on new lines. Eighteen forty-eight was the real date of the awakening and the recognition of the Hungarian masses.

It was the "storm and stress" period of the youth as he entered into the broad arena of life. How revolutionary and bitter many of his early writings were, and how he has lived to laugh over a good deal that was in them himself! "The paroxysms of a crushed spirit, the dreamy phantoms of a diseased imagination, self-contempt, a moon-sick view of the world in general, characterize all my tales belonging to that period," he declares. It was a time for mental disquiet and distortion, and a period of *weltschmerz* for his youth, as well as for Hungary as a nation, and all his feelings bore this color. The warning voice was not missing, but came to him declaring "the path along which

you are now rushing so impetuously leads straight to the gallows — or else to suicide." In Jókai's case it came near to both; his friend, Alexander Petöfi, the national lyricist, was happy in losing his life on a battlefield for Independence.

It is the vivid picture of the Revolution of 1848 and his own share and experience therein which forms, historically, the most valuable part of the volume "Eyes Like the Sea." The mere facts are that he was at first editor of a notorious weekly newspaper in 1846, and when, in 1848-9, the flames of the Revolution burst forth in their intensity, he was a prominent figure in all. It was he who proclaimed in 1848 "The Twelve Articles of Pest," the Hungarian pronouncement of civil rights and liberty.

It was in the midst of this scene, both animated by a common purpose, that he and the woman of his fate met. Rosa Laborfalvi¹ was the greatest of Hungarian tragediennes, and was present in the crowd and exhibited a like enthusiasm and even madness.

The scene of their meeting is a fine one. The rain was falling and was almost threatening to quench the sparks of revolution in the kindling. The circumstances are given in Jókai's own words:

I noticed that there were not only gentlemen around me, but ladies also. A pair of them had insinuated themselves close to my side. In one of them I recognized "Queen Gertrude" (as the actress was known who excelled in that part). On her head she wore a plumed cap and was wrapped up in a Persian shawl embroidered with palm-tree flowers. Both cap and shawl were dripping with rain. I had met the lady once or twice at the Szigligetis'. I exhorted the ladies to go home; here they would get dripping wet, I said, and some other accident might befall them. "We are no worse off here than you are," was the reply. They were determined to wait till the printed broadsides were ready.

The insurgents next proceeded to the Town Hall, there to ratify the "Articles" and then scatter them abroad. In the evening the whole town was illuminated in honor, and

¹ She was not the wife of Jókai's friend, the poet Petöfi, as one of the many biographical sketches loosely states.

a free performance was determined upon at the theatre. Here pandemonium reigned; the performance was too tame a procedure and had to come to a stop; the revolution had begun in earnest; for a moment everything seemed lost.

The author continues:

Then a thought occurred to me. I could get on to the stage from Nyáry's box; I rushed in through the side wings.

I cut a pretty figure I must say. I was splashed up to the knees with mud from scouring the streets all day. I wore huge, dirty, overshoes, my tall hat was drenched, so that I could easily have made a crush hat of it and carried it under my arm.

I looked around me and perceived Egressy. I told him to draw up the curtain. I wanted to harangue the people from the stage.

Then "Queen Gertrude" came towards me. She smiled upon me with truly majestic grace, greeted me, and pressed my hand. No sign of fear was to be seen in her face. She was wearing the tri-colored cockade on her bosom, and, of her own accord, she took it off and pinned it on my breast. Then the curtain was raised.

The bit of ribbon rosette, in the Hungarian colors—red, white, and green—proved the salvation of the hour. To wear the cockade himself, everyone had first to hurry home; the theatre was soon emptied and peace was preserved.

I hastened after Rosa Laborfalvi as soon as this scene was over, and pressed her hand. With that pressure of our hands our engagement began.

In 1849 Jókai joined with the fortunes of the Hungarian government at Debreczlin, began editing another newspaper, and was present at the capitulation of Vilagos on August 29. Death stared him in the face as a rebel. Many of the Hungarian leaders fell on their swords like King Saul and his armor bearer to escape worse than death at the hands of the Philistines; and Jókai, too, had resolved himself upon a like fate. In this hour of need, he was saved both from the enemy and from himself by the woman of his life. His heroic wife, who had shared every anxiety as well as hope, who seemed to use here rôle at the theatre as mere preparation for taking part in more real and living tragedies of the human soul, followed him up and came to him in the hour of despondency, and by her woman's wit and tact and love saved a star to Hungary and to the world. In one

point at least like Milton, his gifts were to unfold still further in time of peace. The wife had shrewdly converted all her jewels and finery into gold, she helped her husband disguise himself, and cheating the hostile government of its prey, in the character of peasants they made their way on foot through the heart of the Russian army, in search of a secure hiding place in the obscure depths of the vast forests. As the author himself portrays it in the pages of his own book, it seems providential.

Jókai was to remain hidden in the deep beech forests while his wife returned to Pest to resume her engagement at the National Theatre. If they could win back Jókai's patrimony, they intended purchasing a little property in the heart of the beeches, close to his father-in-law, and plough and sow the rest of his days. He plaintively asks: "What else could we do? Our country, our nation, our liberty were now no more. Our souls had no wings. We stuck fast in the mire."

Meanwhile, his wife encountered many difficulties at the capital. The National Theatre had fallen into the hands of the opposing element, the Germans. Her husband could only write to her by most indirect methods. From August till the middle of October he remained in the dark forest, his impatient soul knowing absolutely nothing of what was going on in the world around him. Shut in by such scenes and occupied alone by his thoughts, he abandons himself to his inborn love of nature, turns the inner eye of memory back over the past, and gives vent in glowing burning words to his feelings and impressions, as they surge within his breast or pass in review before him. A certain impatience siezes hold upon him, and a spirit of bitterness and intense hatred towards all his surroundings and conditions creeps over him — the existent conditions of his country and its people. "Alas! thou white-antlered hind of our ancient leader Almos, whither hast thou led us? Would that thou hadst left us in Asia! There, at any rate, we would not have been obliged to learn German!"

In the power of description, disclosing the vast depths of forest sketching far into the unknown, and the high boulders piled up in their immensity, and in the feeling for beauty, commingled with the intensity of dramatic interest nowhere let go, the book has rich charms. But these passages must be left to the reader, and it is obviously unfair to deal too liberally with extracts.

Vivid descriptions, however, are even better fitted to revolutionary scenes of burning and pillage and horror than to idyllic landscapes. His native village falls a prey to the flames of war and of rapine. The recital is set forth, adroitly enough, in the words of the woman with the Eyes like the Sea — and all the livid glories of the fatal scene are portrayed, in language hurrying us on tumultuously, and recalling, not a little, the highly colored horror and rapid movement of the brilliant narrative of another Revolution in Carlyle's pages.

These are not the only passages which give full opportunity to his rich descriptive faculty and dramatic talent in story telling. The terrible death of two gypsies, tracked and treed by the wolves of the endless forests, is peculiarly drastic; it is so livid that we close our eyes with a shudder to avoid viewing the tearing of the flesh and the crunching of the bones in our presence.

In the sore hour of need, and almost of despair, outcast and fugitive as he was, he was tempted to turn his back on his country and betake himself to Paris, that home and place of refuge for so many infected with the germs of Revolution. Even should he come out with his life, if he continued to write in Hungary, it could be only under an assumed name; and, indeed, for years his novels and articles following this period were all signed by different *noms de plume*. Still his spirit remained undaunted:

If I live, I will build a tower out of the ruins of my country's glory; if I die, my grave will become an altar. Vainly does this coward flesh of mine tremble in every nerve. I am neither a hero nor a giant. The report of a gun makes me tremble; I grow pale in the presence of death; grief draws

tears from me—but I will not depart from my set path. If I cannot write under my own name, I will write under the name of my landlord's dog. I will be "Sajo" (a name actually employed). We'll bark if we can't speak, but we'll not be silent.

Truly, a noble eloquence arising from a tortured spirit seeking utterance!

But the thought of Paris was very alluring and came back to his fancy again and again, and he could not readily shake it off:

To become a great French writer! To be raised aloft on the shoulders of the most glorious of nations! What here at home was but the crack of a whip in my hands, would there be a thunderbolt!

And he continues:

Ah! what a different man I should have become. Had I fled, I should now be the grand master of the Realists, for there is as much erotic flame, satiric vein, and luxurious fancy in me as in them; but I have not used these qualities because I write for an Hungarian public. Had I flown, millions would have read my works, and fathers and mothers would have cursed me as the corruptor of their children. And I should have laughed at them, and tapped the fat paunch, which as an idealistic writer I have never been able to acquire.

It was by his wife's intervention and by a fiction, as told here, that Jókai was at last enabled to escape and to return to Pest. She succeeded in securing for him a passport; for, when the Komorn garrison capitulated and the officers were guaranteed life and liberty, a friend wrote Jókai's name in the list of capitulating lieutenants, and handed the passport bearing his name to his wife.

His life was at first very quiet and naturally so, since he was still under police supervision. His work was that of the journalist and editor, but only possible under various assumed names. One of these, for a while, was "Kakas Martin" (Martin Cock). "Eh! what a popular man I was then! There were Kakas Martin clays, with bowls in the shape of cock-headed men. I really was in the mouth of the nation in those days. *O tempi passati.*"

When one political sheet would come to grief, immediately another would spring up to take its place. There might be a nominal publicly advertised and responsible edi-

tor, but Jókai was really the mouthpiece and ruling genius. And it was not play besides, not to speak of its dangers, for it was a life of incessant unsparing work, with little rest and recreation. This sort of thing was more than he could stand, and he broke down, siezed with a hemorrhage. This was in the year 1858, and the ill symptoms were only cured by five or six hours' daily exercise in the saddle in a bold expedition of some weeks' duration to the Western Carpathian Alps.

Owing to journalistic indiscretion, our author also was to experience the confinement of a prison. It was the story of Leigh Hunt's imprisonment repeated. His stay indoors was one of the brightest and most restful episodes in his life. He made a cosy home for himself inside the walls, and worked away steadily except when interrupted by the pretty steady flow of visitors. Indeed, he was forced to beg his jailer for *solitary* confinement from them.

He became further and further engrossed in the questions and movements of the day. The cause of letters suffered; he even intimates that his home suffered before this all-demanding goddess, *Politica*.

But we have portrayed enough of the man as drawn in his own pages, and there is no candid expression of a man's past feelings and purposes that has not a peculiar charm, all its own. We have seen him a man of letters, a journalist, a political leader, and later he became a member of Parliament for the National-Liberals; among more recent honors, he is fellow of the Royal Academy of Sciences in Hungary, and President of the Petöfi Society, and has of late been elected an honorary member of the International Literary Congress at a session held in London. Despite his fifty years' service, he is still working, in his desire to complete, while he may yet live, what may prove to be the Hungarian national songs of the Niebelungen. Here we will leave him, still dreaming of his country and seeking to put into expression, as best he may, the essence of the thought and aspiration and character of his native tongue and land.

Perhaps we ought to have spoken more of the wonderful vigor of his work and the inimitable charm and lightness of his narrative — particularly, of the alluring attractiveness of his heroine, Bessy. She is the leading figure in the volume considered as a novel, and it was a happy and genuine artistic touch to tell much of the story in her words. In any other way, our minds would possibly have dwelt more upon the improbabilities of the recital and not so much upon its intense delightfulness. In this, as in other points of narrative style, Jókai actively recalls the charm of our late ill-fated prince of narrators, Mr. Robert Louis Stevenson, whose “*New Arabian Nights*” are hardly more fantastic and fascinating than many of Jókai’s fancies. The author’s personality hovers over all. That he writes rapidly, we feel from the glow; that he never blots his own pages is, perhaps, also in evidence — possibly unfortunately so — for he has unquestionably often written unwisely and too much.

And what of Bessy? incomparable, high-spirited Bessy, who had five husbands, and was surely so delightful and irresistible she could have found no difficulty in obtaining as many more, had not the fifth, as in the case of the Wife of Bath (and the fifth one too, in both instances, smacking somewhat of clericalism) proved fatal. A certain resemblance Mr. Bain, the translator, has already found between her and “that other delightful and original rogue in romance,” the lady who becomes Mrs. Desborough in Mr. Stevenson’s “*Dynamiter*.” They both can tell such enchanting and thrilling adventures and apparently, too, love so warmly and devotedly! And someone else — a friend in reading — has suggested what English heroine is there so like Bessy in her fascination, and who wrought such havoc and ended even so miserably, as *Beatrix Esmond*? The lively heroine animates so vividly and intensely the pages of this book, that we almost resent having our picture disarranged and our fancies mentally dissected by the matter of fact information hinted at in the closing chapter, that

the author happened upon her in visiting a house of correction for women trespassers, and there the original stood before him, and thus the tale became told!

We can now better understand how Jókai has been called the Dumas of Hungary. As an exception to all other contemporaneous literatures—French, Italian, and Spanish; German, Hollandish, and Scandinavian; Slavonic, and English and American, too, in their latest developments—the novel of adventure and humor is still popular in Hungary, and rich exuberance of fancy and of language is still permitted. With an historic past close behind its people, the spirit engendered therefrom has fostered their romantic temperament. This spirit is clearest seen in Maurus Jókai. He is virtually the creator of the Hungarian novel, and as has been intimated, has written near a library full. His translator, the biographer and translator, too, of Hans Christian Andersen, thus characterizes him: "He possesses a gorgeous fancy, an all-embracing imagination, and a constructive skill unsurpassed in modern fiction; but his most delightful quality is his humor, a humor of the cheeriest, heartiest sort, without a single *soupeçon* of ill-nature about it, a quality precious in any age, and doubly so in an overwrought, supercivilized age like our own."

For ten years after the Revolution Hungarian literature was nearly extinct; all the old forces had become scattered and annihilated. Almost alone Jókai created a new literature. He betook himself to fiction when political journalism failed. Here was the great misfortune from the point of view of literary art. When a man does so much and such varied work, a good deal of it is bound to be inferior. But his wealth, as has been suggested, springs from sheer exuberance, and it is not a mark of exhaustion.

And should we ask, in the end, what are the author's own thoughts as to the spirit which has animated this work, the answer comes clear: It is the re-dedication of self to a life of letters!

And now, too, when I stand before the big silly bookcase, which is filled with nothing but my own works, I often think, would it not have been better if they had none of them been ever thought out? And instead of writing so much for the whole world, would it not have been better if I had written for my own private use, just so much as would go within the inside cover of a family Bible? Nowadays, a whole street in my native town is called after my name: would it not have been better if all I had there were a simple hut?

But no! I willed it so, and if it were possible for me to go back to the diverging cross-roads of my opening life, I would tread once more in the self-same footprints that I have left so long behind me.

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HOMICIDE IN THE SOUTHERN STATES.

Outside observers, including those most friendly disposed towards the South, often dwell upon the low estimate our section puts upon human life and the light regard paid by Southern people generally to the crime of murder. That such strictures are well merited, no one who looks into the subject candidly could deny; for it is unfortunately true that in no other part of this country, as long settled as the South has been, are murders so frequent or human life so cheap. It is useless to deny this; it is worse than foolish to endeavor to palliate it. Nor is it the part of wisdom to seek in the number of homicides elsewhere some condonation of that worst of all crimes, whose great prevalence among us is rapidly causing our section, and indeed even our nation, to become a byword among the enlightened peoples of the earth. Things have come to such a pass that one can scarcely pick up a daily newspaper without finding the sickening details of one or more murders, often committed under circumstances of unparalleled atrocity, while the perpetrators of these dark deeds are seldom punished. The South is weary of these crimes; the country is weary of them; the world is weary of them. Men disagree, often about the merest trifle, and everybody expects a row, which usually not only really does take place, but is frequently accompanied by the violent death of one or more of the persons involved, whose lives might have been saved if a little coolness and good sense had been exercised. How often, moreover, the newspaper in chronicling these "difficulties" and "sad occurrences," after describing the stereotyped "gloom" of the community, adds significantly, "further trouble is expected." And how often, too, are such expectations realized, when the kinsmen of the deceased undertake to avenge his death. Then again, who has failed to note the growing frequency of lynchings, whose shocking

barbarity is beginning to arouse universal horror and indignation?

Foreign critics often claim that homicide is a national sin with us; and a few years ago an article appeared in one of the leading English magazines in which it was alleged that the Americans grow more bloodthirsty the further they advance towards maturity as a people. This may or may not be true. But some color is lent to the charge, when one realizes the reckless disregard for life often manifested by those engaged in the transportation of passengers and the housing of the poor, to say nothing of bad sanitary regulations in the larger cities of the New World. This, however, is quite a different thing from premeditated murder and manslaughter committed in the heat of passion, which, excepting New England, are of far too frequent occurrence in a land as old and as advanced as the United States. The gravest feature of Southern homicides, however, lies in the fact that they are often committed by a class of persons one would least suspect of crime; least of all, of the crime of murder. People who have never visited the Southern States but only read of these deeds of violence, are not infrequently inclined to smile when the principals are referred to as "members of prominent families" or "leading citizens." It is sometimes urged, for example, by those ignorant of the facts, that it is impossible to conceive of a man of gentility taking part in the brawls of ruffians or deliberately setting about the killing of a human being, and that while murderous controversies are of more or less frequency everywhere, they are almost invariably confined to the ruder elements of society. That, so far as the South is concerned, this is a mistake, no fair-minded person would be slow to admit. As a matter of fact, while the meaner order of Southern folk often do settle their differences of opinion in the same manner similar classes would everywhere else adopt, in the absence of wholesome legal and moral restraints, it is undeniably true that in the Southern States men of a certain amount of education, and often en-

joying the highest social standing, are not infrequently guilty of the most shocking homicides that ever stained the calendar of a court. Farmers, merchants, bankers, physicians, lawyers, even ministers of the gospel, often slay their fellow-man in private warfare, and after a mock trial are set at liberty, not only with no serious detriment to their reputation, but in many instances with increased popularity. If this is an exaggeration, on what other grounds are we to account for the amazing spectacle, witnessed a few years ago, of several members of Congress who had previously been accused of homicide, representing the same Southern State at the same time? Nor can it possibly have escaped the attention of anyone that whenever a person accused of homicide lacks the influence of money or family or politics, he stands in much greater danger of conviction than if he had enjoyed any of these advantages. In case the victim of homicide is a negro, the formality of a trial is sometimes altogether dispensed with, particularly if the black had enjoyed the reputation of being "sassy" or "uppish;" so when the luckless black finally meets the doom predicted for him, the offense is overlooked by those who believe the act "had to be done."

The whites, of course, are not the only ones who commit murder in the South, for the blacks also have their full share of blame. The great difference, however, between the crimes of the two races appears to lie in the fact that while the law's infraction by colored persons is punished, that by white persons is unpunished, or in other words homicide among the negroes is a crime, but among the whites it is a private affair. The blacks commit most of the murders where robbery or rape is the object. They seldom slay a white man, however, for purposes of revenge, or as the result of a sudden quarrel, long habits of enforced obedience having created in them a sense of inferiority. Besides, as everybody well knows, the negro is naturally the most docile of races, and occasional outbreaks on his part nowadays may be almost invariably traced to the doors

of the meaner whites—those whose sole cause of pride is their complexion. But the proneness of the blacks to assault white women, frequently putting them to death with savage ferocity, has done more to injure the negroes of the South than all other causes combined, since slavery vanished from America. To add that those accused of such crimes are rarely given a regular trial, but are often slain by every form of torture a mob can devise, would be but stating a fact with which we are all perfectly familiar.

Curiously enough, the murder of white men by members of their own race, is far more frequent in the South to-day than ever before, and notwithstanding the fact that the machinery of local government is everywhere in the hands of the Caucasian, this internecine warfare is almost everywhere on the increase. When one begins to seek an explanation of this extraordinary phenomenon, one finds that the causes producing it are numerous. One man says something about another or over-reaches him in a business transaction or ill uses one's female relative. The two men meet, as often by design as by accident, and since it is almost universally customary in many sections of the South for the average man to carry at least one revolver in the hip-pocket—everywhere in the Southern States significantly called the "pistol pocket"—the trial by battle occurs. The shooting is liable to take place wherever the parties meet, whether at church or in the courthouse, in the street, in the cars, or elsewhere. As the firing is at close range, it generally results in the killing of at least one of the men, usually the one who failed in first pulling out his revolver. Here and there an innocent bystander is killed. If a trial, or what is euphemistically called a trial, takes place, the prisoner (courteously designated the accused) sets up the plea of self-defense, which in nine cases out of ten is sustained, for long before the trial occurs friends of the murderer are ingeniously working in the community to create sympathy in his favor. The dead man's faults are recalled, but his murderer's good traits are emphasized. No small

wonder, therefore, that on the day of the so-called trial a complete reversal of public sentiment is noticeable, and the jury either brings in a verdict of acquittal or else the prisoner escapes punishment through a "disagreement." A very remarkable circumstance connected with these homicides is the failure of friends to effect a reconciliation between the parties and the neglect of those charged with the enforcement of the law to arrest men who are known to be armed for the express purpose of shedding blood. For in by far the greater number of "difficulties" it is known beforehand just what is about to happen, intimations of an impending struggle being whispered on the streets or in the country store, and everybody is listening for the reports of firearms that are to send one or more citizens into eternity. Yet scarcely a word is spoken or a step taken towards preventing the crime. Shooting at sight is the successor of the old system of duelling without that system's formality and efforts at fairness, since no duelist of the ancient régime would have dared to fire upon an unarmed adversary. **Duelling, therefore, bad as it was, was incomparably superior to the cowardly practice which succeeded it—a practice that not only permits a ruffian to take a man unawares, but often to stalk him as one would game.**

Paradoxical though the statement may at first appear, with the growth of private warfare among the whites, there are less and less killings of blacks by whites or of whites by blacks, but this gratifying and cheering indication may be easily accounted for. Just after the close of the War of Secession race conflicts predominated, for the sense of a common suffering engendered during four years of excitement and anguish, was projected into the period of reconstruction, when the joint regency of the "carpet-bagger" and the "scalawag" welded the native whites, socially as well as politically. The ties of camp life also held the old soldiers together. It was no unusual thing in those days, however, for bloody battles to take place between the whites and blacks; but nowadays such conflicts are of rare oc-

currence in the more progressive Southern communities. Now and then a negro and a white man get into a quarrel which results in the killing of one or the other (usually it is the negro who is slain), but in by far the greater number of instances such disputes occur among the lower sorts of both races.

While homicides resulting from feuds and sudden quarrels are of frequent occurrence in the Southern States, murders committed for the purpose of robbery are surprisingly rare, and when they do occur as much horror is manifested there as in other parts of the country. It is true homicides of this type for the most part occur in the larger towns or in remote portions of the rural districts, but, all things considered, they are as rare, if not rarer, in the South than in some other localities of the Union. Being usually the work of the less thrifty class of negroes, crimes of this description are almost invariably punished. So also are malicious injuries to property, such as the mutilation of animals used on the farm and the theft of personalty. In other words, proprietary rights are of more consequence in the South than rights of the person. In regard to the butchery of helpless white females by black rapists, and the lynching of those accused of such crimes, something has already been said, but during the past year these forms of violence have been so often before the public as to demand a more than ordinary description. It would, first of all, be a mistake to assume, as is so often done by the uninformed, that negroes are charged with the crime of rape in order to find a pretext for putting them to death. On the contrary, few who pay the penalty of their lust in this illegal manner are guiltless of the offense with which they are charged, for the mob usually goes about its work with the deliberation of a judicial assembly. If, for example, the victim or the intended victim of the rapist is alive, the prisoner is usually conducted into her presence, an examination ensues, and if in the opinion of the vigilants the right man has been captured, the execution immediately takes place. Sometimes the

"leading citizens" of the community take part in such executions, but the rougher elements of society are usually the moving spirits of the lynching; and, although an occasional effort is made by the officers of the law to protect the prisoner, their resistance is usually purely technical, and meant solely for political effect. Indeed, the officers are often in league with the mob.

Assaults upon white women occur, for the most part, in the country or in the outskirts of towns where there is no police protection whatsoever, and while rare during the existence of slavery, appear now to be constantly increasing in number and violence. This may partly be attributable to the lack of steady employment and the increasing disinclination on the part of many of the blacks to work at anything. Hence the ranks of the vagrant class of negroes is being rapidly swelled, while the number of those exposed to the temptations of the idle is increased yearly. In other words, it is extremely rare to hear of a thrifty, respectable colored man committing rape; indeed, he is most outspoken in its condemnation, and even sometimes takes a hand in the lynching, when allowed to do so. The crime is usually committed either by a "strange nigger" or by the more shiftless resident blacks of the neighborhood. To the swinging body of the dead man the lynchers are accustomed to pin a placard, on which are written words to this effect: "The honor of our women shall be protected," and very often threats are made against persons who undertake to cut the corpse down before the expiration of a stated time. Do such measures protect women? They do not; for the more the lynchings, the more the rapes. Furthermore (and this is the saddest part of the whole miserable story) the woman is now almost invariably murdered by her assailant in order to seal her lips from the mob. Lynching, also, has departed from its original type, for while at first confined to the one crime of rape when indignant men swung a guilty wretch from the limb of a tree before any trial had taken place, men are sometimes lynched nowadays after the court

has sentenced them. Judge Lynch, moreover, has extended his jurisdiction, and now tries persons accused of murder, larceny, robbery, arson, or any other offense. Now it so happened that with the growth of mob law men gradually came to the conclusion that if a negro could be lynched for violating the ordinary rights of property, lynching was "too good for him" in the case of rape. Hence the rise of the practice of mutilating the body of the prisoner and burning him at the stake. So far from attempting to conceal their identity, the lynchers often do their work in broad daylight and in the more crowded thoroughfares of the larger towns, yet although these men are known, even to those whose duty it is to arrest them, next to nothing is done. If the matter comes up before the grand jury, it rarely goes any further.

Much of the lawlessness of the Southern States arises from the attempt to apply rules of procedure adopted centuries ago, to modern ways of thinking and acting. In spite of what is often said to the contrary, many upright persons are inclined to feel that something is radically wrong, when prisoners accused of the gravest crimes either escape punishment altogether, or by an undue exercise of the right of appeal, have their sentences postponed almost indefinitely. The truth of the matter is, the subtleties of the common law are often refined to a grotesquely ridiculous extent under the cultivation of backwoods jurists or dishonest practitioners. The low standard of legal education in the South, added to the system of electing judges for a term of years rather than during good behavior, is largely responsible for the growing frequency of homicides in our section. Of course there are still many able and reputable lawyers in the Southern States; but few people realize how rapidly the bar has deteriorated of late years. It is, therefore, scarcely to be wondered at that legal reforms are almost impossible or that cases are often tied up for years in litigation. Owing his position mainly to the influential members of the bar, the judge convenes court; one of the attorneys is "not ready;"

an adjournment is asked, and the petitioner being a personal or a political friend of the judge, the request is granted almost as a matter of course. Even if the case is ever tried, there is an amount of quibbling and vapping — sometimes lasting for several days — that would not be tolerated elsewhere. It not infrequently happens that after all the harangues, and objections, and dilatory pleas without number, the mind of the juror, even though he is an intelligent man, is so bewildered and befogged that he is unable to form an opinion upon any subject, to say nothing of the practice of bribery, which is far more frequent in the South than one imagines. Plain, matter-of-fact sort of people, therefore, having grown weary of what appeared to them to be a travesty of justice, and with many prejudices against the negro, took hold of the subject of rape, and picturing to their minds what might take place if a trial occurred, resolved to execute the law in what seemed to them to be a less technical and uncertain manner. Then, again, there was a feeling of aversion when they contemplated the spectacle of a white woman facing a black man in court, for all such trials are public.

Two other forms of homicide, the shooting of persons engaged in stealing and the killing of persons fleeing from justice, are quite common in the Southern States. Every man, of course, has a right to protect his property, and it is the duty of an officer to arrest a lawbreaker; but it is one thing to defend one's house from burglars and quite another to slay a man robbing a hen roost or a potato patch. It is, moreover, a dangerous experiment to arm officers of the law with deadly weapons, and to virtually intrust them with the power of life and death over the members of a community.

In view of what has already been said, it is scarcely surprising to learn from the elaborate bulletin prepared a few years ago for the Department of the Interior by Mr. Frederick W. Wines, that of the 82,329 prisoners in the United States June 1, 1890, 7,351, or nearly 9 per cent.,

were charged with homicide, of which number 3,632 were in the South.¹ In other words, although the population of the Southern States is barely a third of that of the entire country, about one-half of the prisoners charged with homicide, are there. In the battle of Antietam, the bloodiest of the War of Secession, the total number of persons killed on both sides was scarcely four thousand. A more careful examination of the report of Mr. Wines, an excerpt from which appears on another page of this article, will reveal still more astonishing facts. In the year 1890, for example, the number of persons charged with homicide was identically the same in the States of Mississippi and Ohio, 217, yet the population of the latter State is three times as great as that of the former. In the same year 730 persons were accused of homicide in Texas, and although the population of Texas and of Massachusetts is about the same — being something over two million — yet the number of persons charged with homicide in Massachusetts in 1890, was but 86.

The statistics of Mr. Wines appear to assign the greater number of homicides to the so-called South Central States, including Kentucky, Tennessee, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, Texas, and Arkansas, a region justly famous for its unexampled industrial activity. The last census fixed the population of the South Central States at 8,857,920. According to Mr. Wines, 2,545 prisoners were charged with homicide in those States in the year 1890. Italy, the European country where murders appear to be most frequent, has a population of some 29,699,785 — more than three times that of the above States. Italy's annual crop of murders is 2,470. It should be noted, however, that the Italian figures represent actual murders, rather than all varieties of homicides, as is the case with the American table, and do include prisoners serving long terms, as apparently the figures of Mr. Wines do. But it is no less interesting to

¹ It should be noted that in these figures, when comparison is made with those for 1880, care should be taken to allow for the counting twice of some long-term prisoners.

NUMBER OF PRISONERS CHARGED WITH HOMICIDE AND THE NUMBER IN EACH MILLION OF THE POPULATION IN 1890 AND 1880, THE ABSOLUTE AND RELATIVE INCREASE OR DECREASE, AND THE PERCENTAGES OF INCREASE AND DECREASE, BY STATES AND TERRITORIES.

Geographical Divisions	1890			1880			Increase		Decrease		Percentages	
	Population	Homi- cides	Ratio	Population	Homi- cides	Ratio	Absolute	Rela- tive	Abso- lute	Rela- tive	In- crease	De- crease
The United States	62,622,250	7,351	117	50,155,783	4,608	92	2,743	25			27.17	
Maine	661,086	42	64	648,936	29	45	13	19			42.22	
New Hampshire	376,530	20	53	346,991	17	49	3	4			8.16	
Vermont	332,422	24	72	332,286	11	33	13	39			118.18	
Massachusetts	2,238,943	86	38	1,783,085	83	47	3			9		19.15
Rhode Island	345,506	15	43	276,531	11	40	4	3			7.50	
Connecticut	746,258	61	82	622,700	46	74	15	8			10.81	
New York	5,997,853	473	79	5,082,871	280	55	193	24		2	43.64	
New Jersey	1,444,933	78	54	1,131,116	63	56	15	15				3.57
Pennsylvania	5,258,014	288	55	4,282,891	180	42	108	13			30.95	
North Atlantic	17,401,545	1,087	62	14,597,407	720	50	367	12			24.00	
Delaware	168,493	6	36	146,608	8	55			2	19		34.55
Maryland	1,042,390	84	81	934,943	96	103			12	22		21.36
Dist of Columbia	230,392	10	43	177,624	9	51	1			8		15.69
Virginia	1,655,980	163	98	1,512,565	148	98	15					
West Virginia	762,794	67	88	618,457	32	52	35	36			69.23	
North Carolina	1,617,947	139	86	1,399,750	65	46	74	40			86.96	
South Carolina	1,151,149	158	137	995,577	87	87	71	50			57.47	
Georgia	1,837,353	347	189	1,542,180	187	121	160	68			56.20	
Florida	391,422	113	289	269,493	31	115	82	174			151.30	
South Atlantic	8,857,920	1,087	123	7,597,197	663	87	424	36			41.38	

Ohio	3,672,316	217	59	136	43	81	16	37.21
Indiana	2,192,404	225	103	157	79	68	24	30.38
Illinois	3,826,351	362	95	268	87	94	8	9.20
Michigan	2,093,889	176	84	107	65	66	19	29.23
Wisconsin	1,686,880	127	75	71	54	56	21	38.89
Minnesota	1,301,826	65	50	52	67	13	17	25.37
Iowa	1,911,896	115	60	92	57	23	3	5.26
Missouri	2,679,184	233	87	234	108	23	1	21
North Dakota	182,719	12	66	3	22	30	44	200.00
South Dakota	328,808	21	64	61	135	9	42	190.91
Nebraska	1,058,910	70	66	88	88	85	69	51.11
Kansas	1,427,096	173	121	996,096	88	85	33	37.50
North Central	22,362,279	1,796	80	1,269	73	527	7	9.59
Kentucky	1,858,635	439	236	185	112	254	124	110.71
Tennessee	1,767,518	297	168	180	117	117	51	43.59
Alabama	1,513,017	336	222	174	138	162	84	60.87
Mississippi	1,289,600	217	168	202	179	15	11	6.15
Louisiana	1,118,587	328	293	178	189	150	104	55.03
Texas	2,235,523	730	327	447	281	283	46	16.37
Oklahoma	61,834	198	176	107	133	91	43	32.33
Arkansas	1,128,179	2,545	232	1,473	165	1,072	67	40.61
South Central	10,972,893	2,545	232	1,473	165	1,072	67	40.61
Montana	132,159	45	340	39,159	1	44	314	1,207.69
Wyoming	60,795	82	184	20,789	5	30	159	65.98
Colorado	412,198	76	358	194,327	46	237	53	22.36
New Mexico	153,593	55	54	119,565	14	41	241	205.98
Arizona	59,620	54	906	40,440	15	39	535	144.20
Utah	207,995	20	96	143,963	4	16	68	242.86
Nevada	45,761	41	896	62,266	46	739	157	21.24
Idaho	84,385	26	308	32,610	7	19	93	43.26
Washington	349,390	42	120	75,116	20	266	146	54.89
Oregon	313,767	54	172	174,768	19	109	63	57.80
California	1,208,130	418	346	864,694	306	354	8	2.26
Western	3,027,613	836	276	1,767,697	483	353	3	1.10

observe that the South Central States, where feuds are most virulent, embrace those mountainous regions least inhabited by negroes. One should also bear in mind that the Southern States contain few foreigners, the last census, for example, giving the ratio of foreign-born to native-born citizens in Alabama as 2.50, Tennessee 2.74, and Georgia 1.75; while the same ratio was in New York 38.73, Illinois 36.39, and Massachusetts 38.66.

The causes of this great blot upon the South have been already partly indicated. Quarrels, race antipathies, the defective administration of the law, apathy and indifference on the part of molders of public opinion — these are largely responsible for the deplorable lack of that regard for life one would hope to find. Then again, ignorance is everywhere the prolific mother of all varieties of transgressions, not to mention idleness and intemperance. Curiously enough, however, Mr. Wines shows that in 1890, 66.57 per cent. of all the prisoners in the United States charged with homicide had received an elementary education, and that 3.44 per cent. had enjoyed the privileges of higher training. He shows also that ignorance of a trade leads to crime; but 19.35 per cent. of those charged with homicide in 1890 were mechanics, 20.10 per cent. were total abstainers, and only 19.87 per cent. were returned as drunkards. In the South, climate seems to have very little to do with it, although the food and whisky consumed in many localities may contribute their due share towards the evil. Of course the influence of heredity should not be overlooked. How often, for example, does one hear of several generations of fighters "who died with their boots on." Mr. Wines is not inclined to agree with those who claim that homicides are, in a measure, due to maladministration. He says: "The sections in which there are the most executions are those in which there are the most lynchings. The number of executions and of lynchings reported by the sheriffs of the Southern States is identically the same. It is further to be noted that the largest number both of executions and of

lynchings is in the South Central division, where the average sentence for homicide is longest, and where the percentage of long sentences imposed by the courts is the highest." Additional light might have been thrown on the subject, however, by indicating the ratio of convictions in the case of the whites and the blacks respectively.

Slavery, of course, had a tendency in many ways to diminish one's regard for the life of others, since it developed among the whites mediæval conceptions of honor, and at the same time placed the blacks almost at the mercy of their owners. Notwithstanding this fact, however, the proprietary character of the slave afforded him a protection which he lost when made free; for under the slave codes it was no unusual thing for a white man to suffer death for killing another's slave. Then again, the agricultural character of the pursuits of the great majority of people has prevented the growth of a healthy public sentiment in many sections of the South and at the same time produced a tendency to rely upon self-help rather than upon a defective system of local government. Men of the more influential classes, too, often appear to think it somewhat degrading to appeal to the legally established tribunals when their "honor" is involved. This feeling may, of course, be directly traced to the patriarchal character of society in the days of slavery, when the father had almost complete control over the members of the family. Then again, the late war by accustoming the people for four years to bloodshed and violence, and the disorganization of society at the close of that struggle, have had no little to do with causing the crime of homicide in the South. Disbanded soldiers, for example, particularly those who had been engaged in irregular forms of warfare, often returned home to continue their excesses under the guise of "Ku-Klux" and "bushwhackers." In some portions of the Southern States these men instituted a reign of terror. Of course the better class of ex-Confederates usually discountenanced such misdoings and went to work to rebuild their shattered fortunes with sublime hero-

ism and the utmost good faith. All things considered, however, the twelve years following the surrender of General Lee's army were the most demoralizing the Southern States ever experienced, being infinitely more disintegrating than the period covered by the War of Secession. Everything was turned upside down. Because of their participation in the rebellion, a majority of the whites had been disfranchised, while the sceptre of power fell into the hands of the blacks — destitute of knowledge by laws of compulsory ignorance. As is well known, the men who essayed the task of leading these children of the sun during their years of tutelage were adventurers from the North and native whites whom the disturbances of the period had thrown to the surface of politics. These men, denominated respectively in the parlance of that day "carpet-baggers" and "scalawags," while occasionally honest and capable, were on the whole as shameless a set of plunderers as ever exploited the public. By and by the ex-Confederates began to manifest an active interest in politics, and when their disqualifications were removed, they redoubled their efforts to secure control of the Southern local governments. This had the effect of increasing the number of acts of violence, and in the numerous "riots" that ensued not a few men were slain, to say nothing of those who fell by the hand of the hired assassin. The animosity of the whites extended to all whose political views differed from their own, and when threats failed to bring the "carpet-baggers" and "scalawags" to terms, murder was frequently resorted to, the excuse being "it had to be done."

Meanwhile, the "radical" governments had organized the blacks into military companies and union leagues, whose members were armed and regularly drilled. These black soldiers often "carried on" in a high manner, precipitating their own slaughter as well as that of the whites. Nor were the garrisons of United States soldiers, which were quartered in the larger towns, able to check the disorders of the times. Under such circumstances, harmony seemed out of

the question. Another great difficulty that stood in the way of the political union of the two races was the firm conviction of the whites that a huge conspiracy existed "up North" whose avowed purpose was their humiliation by the establishment of the "social equality" of the negroes. The latter, on the other hand, believed just as sincerely that the moment the "white folks got into power" the chains of slavery would clank again. Of course the Southern people themselves were largely responsible for the evils of reconstruction, but in spite of errors on their part, the sufferings they underwent were often unavoidable. The upshot of the matter was that about twenty years ago, after having vainly striven by compromises and similar mild measures to rid themselves of their corrupt rulers, the whites gained control of the Southern governments by campaigns of frauds and violence, whose direful results are felt to this day. The years that followed were years of unusual quiet and progress. Business revived; a new impulse was given to the cause of education, and there was everywhere a spirit of hope and enterprise such as the South had never witnessed before. But beneath all the superficial evidences of prosperity, as seen in the construction of railways, and the expansion of commerce, there was the smothered thunder of an approaching earthquake. For the whites rapidly began to learn that it was a far easier matter to count men into office than to count them out again.

It must be remembered that until but yesterday there has been in most sections of the Southern States but one political party. This organization, although styling itself democratic, at one time almost everywhere assumed arbitrary power. To question its policy, to criticise its methods, to refuse to support the men nominated for office by a conclave of its managers or "bosses" was, until very recently, almost as much as a white man's life was worth, and meant the ruin of a newspaper. Many persons tamely submitted to this yoke, because they feared that revolt on their part would have the result of establishing "negro domination,"

an argument the party leaders knew how to use with telling effect. During the first few years of its supremacy, the Democratic party retained the confidence of almost everybody. Its methods were somewhat after this fashion: A few men would assemble in convention, proclaim the nomination of a set of officers often agreed upon by an executive committee beforehand, and then adjourn. By and by, however, the "convention plan" became so unbearable that the plan of having primary elections was adopted. At these "primaries" no one but a member of some Democratic club could vote. The primary attracted universal interest, for it practically decided the result of the regular election since the negroes were virtually disfranchised. It not infrequently happened, however, that the sin of ambition entered the fold to disturb that harmony so delightful to the faithful. It was urged, for instance, that since "Gen." So-and-so had fed at the public crib for several years, by all the principles of Jefferson he should allow Mr. So-and-so the opportunity of repairing his shattered exchequer from the same source; but, naturally enough, he of the military type viewed the subject in an altogether different light. Then again, the rascals who had stuffed ballot-boxes and assassinated negroes began to complain bitterly that their "valuable services" had been ill-requited. During the excitement of such campaigns of crimination and recrimination, candidates often told their opponents that if what they had said was disliked, everybody knew where to find them, which was frequently the prelude to a bloody encounter. When those accused of homicides of this character were brought to trial, of course they were not punished, for that would have seriously injured the party in power. Were they not all good Democrats? Naturally, moreover, the universal consciousness that fraud sat enthroned in high places conveyed to the popular mind a general feeling of doubt regarding the fairness of judges and the honesty of the ministerial officers. In the far South, moreover, no hope could be expected from the party that there called

itself Republican, for it was organized almost solely for the purpose of getting money from the National Executive Committee of that organization.

The first indications of the disruption of the Democratic party in the South began about ten years ago, and its form was the familiar one of a contest between those who were in and those who were out of power. This was accompanied by a healthier tone on the part of the influential press, which no longer hesitated to denounce the rascality and general shortcomings of public servants. At the same time, a disinclination to support the regular nominees of "the party" was also evinced. With the growing bitterness of these political struggles, homicides among the whites grew more frequent, while widespread bickerings and loss of confidence took the place of that solidarity that had formerly characterized the political action of the Southern whites. A still further element of disintegration appeared in the rivalries between the rising municipalities and the less prosperous agricultural communities, — a feeling designing demagogues quickly employed for the purpose of securing office. Such frictions, however, often founded as they are upon the most ignorant prejudices, are having the fortunate result of breaking up the so-called "Solid South." This result achieved, one may well hope to see the development of two political parties in the Southern States, normally constructed, whose mutual contests for supremacy will ensure that protection of life of which our section stands sorely in need.

A still healthier sign of improvement is the outspoken denunciation of homicide one sees in many of the leading newspapers of the South. This is a great change for the better, for it used to be customary to treat the utterances of of the outside world on this subject as unwarrantable impertinence, or the result of sectional prejudice. Even to-day the more belated journals of the South frequently undertake to meet adverse criticisms regarding homicide in our section by citing similar violations of the law in

other portions of the Union. Other newspapers timidly suggest that the law ought to be enforced, because homicides tend to keep out capital and immigration! Be it said to their credit, however, the more intelligent Southern editors denounce murder, sincerely, bravely, and on the very highest grounds. This was notably true, for example, of that fearless champion of human life, the late Captain Francis W. Dawson, of the *Charleston News and Courier*, who, a few years ago, was himself murdered. Many other newspapers could also be mentioned. It is this growing boldness of the press that constitutes one of the greatest promises for the future, because the more influential section of the press can accomplish a reformation of this evil no other human agency can. Their words will prove a greater power for good than a thousand laws making a county liable in damages to a murdered man's relatives. For what jury will award a verdict to the plaintiff if public opinion does not prove strong enough to suppress homicides?

Of the many plans proposed for suppressing murder in the South, it is somewhat surprising that no one appears even to have suggested the abolition of capital punishment. And yet, whatever merits the death penalty may possess, not a few communities have learned that the enforcement of a law depends rather upon the certainty and celerity and justice than upon the severe character of the punishment meted out to the transgressor. The main object should be the prevention of crime, not the punishment of the criminal. A jury, moreover, will frequently render a verdict for the prosecution when the penalty is imprisonment, whereas if the prisoner would be put to death through their conviction they not infrequently give him every possible benefit of doubt. There should also be efforts made to diminish the number of lynchings by affording more adequate protection to women. The plan suggested by that acute critic of American institutions, Mr. Bryce, for example, has much in it to commend it to Southern legislators. Mr. Bryce is inclined to think that a system of mounted

police for the rural districts would be very serviceable. There appears to be no reason why such a force, organized somewhat like the mounted police of Canada, could not do much effective work. An organization of this kind could render especially valuable services in those sparsely settled communities where the houses are far apart and children are obliged to walk several miles to school.

What is needed above everything else in the Southern States in order to effect a radical cure of the homicidal mania, is a general awakening of the public conscience on the subject. Not that good and kindly and humane sentiments are wanting, for no other part of the world has a larger share of those softening and gracious social virtues that make for peace and good will among men. But unfortunately the class that is silent when it ought to speak out and inert when it ought to act, is either afraid to do more than whisper its protests or else supinely leaves things to take their own course. Meanwhile, the crimson tide rises higher and higher, and will in all probability continue to do so until checked through the pressure of outside influence or the spontaneous development of an overpowering local sentiment. Possibly the present lawlessness, unless summarily dealt with, will be succeeded by an even greater spirit of anarchy, when law and order leagues will have to be formed for the express purpose of making public every homicide and of seeing to it that every accused person is duly prosecuted. For no part of the civilized world can always escape the influence of that wide and deep interest in life now so universally present in every branch of human knowledge and activity. This most striking characteristic of the dying century vivifies everything. Its spirit is humane and tender, and its operations extend even to the lower animals. Its influence animates every writer whose productions are worth the reading, for life is the theme of him who seeks to account for the vagaries of individuals as well as of him who traces the careers of nations. It is, moreover, the background of all those larger move-

ments of more recent times whose goal is the protection and elevation of the race. Go where one will, therefore, one will find a solicitude for the well-being of man and brute alike such as this world has never seen before; and the community that permits the butchery of its members one by another is out of touch with the noblest impulses of the age and will revert to a type of society not found at present among European peoples, unless it be where the crescent has displaced the cross.

B. J. RAMAGE.

PARIS, OLD AND NEW.

Perhaps no city of the modern world has such a universal fascination as that *ville lumière* whither good Americans go when they die, and a company by no means exclusive, Parthians, Medes, Persians, dwellers in Mesopotamia and in all parts of the earth resort while still in this mortal life. Since the Restoration, at least, Paris has never ceased to be to Europe what Venice once was, "the revel of the earth, the masque of Italy". Whatever it may be to the industrious artisans and frugal housewives, to us it is a bright plaisance, a place of joyous relaxation from narrowing cares, a chosen spot of which we may surely say that:

He who of those delights can judge and spare
To interpose them oft, is not unwise.

But, alas, some of us know very well that this is the Paris of our old recollections, not of our present experience, or at least we know that the Paris of to-day is something very different from the Paris of the Second Empire, different even from the Paris of the Third Republic's first decade. To the writer it has always seemed as though each exposition had marked a stage of deterioration, or perhaps, one would better say of vulgarization in the capital of enlightenment. The gayest Paris was that of the decade that followed Solferino, though doubtless the most joyous was the Paris of that *roi d'Yvetot*, Louis Philippe, the Paris of Murger's *Vie de Bohème*, when comfort and even modest luxury was still cheap and economy a fine art, when taste made the grisette's calico *comme il faut* and people really believed, what most Parisians now regard as a grotesque bit of *blague*, that content was "really better than wealth." After 1867, for all its brilliant array, there was a dull and growing uneasiness. More and more people began to see something like a hand that wrote on the wall: I have num-

bered thy days and finished them. Then came the national humiliation of Sedan and the disgrace of the Commune. These passed and the people were gay again, but there was something mephitic in the air of the Third Republic, where vice lost all its charm in revealing all its grossness, and where step by step the vulgar vices replaced both the graceful vices of the Empire and the vulgar virtues of the Orleans monarchy. Since 1877 the writer of this paper has visited Paris at intervals of three or four years, and has never failed to mark the downward course. It was therefore with peculiar interest that he undertook to say a few words of "Some Memories of Paris, by F. Adolphus," whose recollections extend over some half a century, a man who knows and loves his Paris, and whose wider knowledge grieves over the same degeneracy that we deplore.

As the title suggests, the plan of his book is to have no plan. He has had varied, interesting, even some exciting experiences, and he has noted them for us as they come to his mind, as he might do of an evening over a winter's fire. A good part of the charm of his book lies in its chattiness. He has talked to us so entertainingly about M. Worth that before we know it we have begun another chapter and are letting him talk to us about General Boulanger. From Boulanger we pass to the opera, and from the opera to the fireside. In general it is a book that will entertain almost all, while those who know their Paris very well are likely to find in it much serious profit. This sounds paradoxical but it is true. If you know by eye or books the Paris of forty years ago, the chances are that you will find your knowledge interestingly supplemented by Mr. Adolphus' first chapter. If you do not know that Paris, he will not give, he hardly tries to give, an accurate general impression. But he is most interesting, and in looking over a volume of Gavarni's sketches of the Parisians of that time the present reviewer found that he had gained light from these "Memories" on several interesting details. Our author has noted what has

¹ New York: H. Holt & Company. 1895.

perhaps escaped some, the radical difference between the population of a Paris street then and now; and he might have added, with some restrictions, between the present Paris and the present Berlin or Vienna. There is no such intermingling of classes as there used to be when the stories of a house represented a fairly complete social stratification. When over the rich people on the first and second floors were clerks and tradespeople *en chambre* on the third and fourth floors, and workmen of all sorts on the fifth and sixth. Thorough mingling of ranks under the same roof was the "rule of life" in the Paris of Louis Philippe, as it is still in many parts of Berlin, and so the streets naturally presented a kaleidoscopic variety. Now this is all changed, and "the growing hate of the masses for the classes has been considerably stimulated by the separation." He notes, too, the changes in trade. Small shops have been crowded to the wall by the great *magazins*, with the social result so well indicated in Zola's *Au Bonheur des dames*, the street venders have ceased to amuse the crowd by their voluble harangues, and here, too, society under its sham democracy is less democratic at heart than under king or emperor.

This is the lesson also of Mr. Adolphus' third chapter, in which he tells of "Two Balls at the Hotel de Ville," one when Queen Victoria visited Paris in 1855, and another after the radical vultures of an elected *conseil municipal* had descended upon it. The former, for all its princes and potentates, for all its fine uniforms and stars of all the orders under heaven, was more democratic, more truly representative of the people than the swinish mob that gathers at the beckoning of the modern Thersites or Cleon. All classes that were interested were represented in them, royalty was neither stared at nor elbowed, they offered a fair and brilliant picture of an era of cosmopolitan peace and goodwill. No one who knows those festivities of the last generation but will be disposed to shake Mr. Adolphus by the hand when he says: "On looking back to other festivals at which I have assisted in many lands, I unhesitatingly put first those balls at the Hotel de Ville of Paris, and I con-

sider it a privilege to have seen them and to have the memory of them." To those who know them not, the reviewer can only say: Read Mr. Adolphus' chapter and you will know the reason why.

Nearly one half of Mr. Adolphus' book is taken up with the "terrible year," or to speak more accurately, with the nine months that separate Sedan from the collapse of the Commune. Like a sensible man, he does not attempt to tell us the history of those days, but only that corner of it which he saw and in much of which he played a modest but not unworthy part. To those who honestly believe, if there be such, in the glittering generality *Vox populi vox dei* one would commend a prayerful consideration of these chapters on the Last Day of the Empire, on the English Food Gifts after the Siege, on the Entry of the Germans, and on the Commune. Mr. Adolphus is not a great writer but he has seen the *bête humaine* uncaged and the impression was too vivid that it should need the art of Dante to convey to his readers a good measure of his horror and disgust at the unveiling of this seething Malebolge. As he leaves the yelling crowds of the Fourth of September, he notes how "the moral impression hung massively upon me. I turned away into back streets, where there were shadows in harmony with my thoughts. I crawled home, lay down and felt wretched. I knew, at last, what it is to see a nation sink." But he did not know into what vileness it had sunk. One may drown in pure water, one may perish at Thermopylæ, but Paris chose to suffocate in a sewer, to hawk and tear at its own prostrate body. Mr. Adolphus came in contact with the foul scum of the Commune during the distribution of the English food-supplies after the first siege, of which he thinks the sufferings and privations grossly exaggerated. He tells us that among the applicants for relief there were rather frequently represented "physiognomies so appallingly depraved, so befouled with degradations and defilements, so denaturalized by hideous appetites that . . . without actually staring at them no one could have supposed

it possible in man. They could not be described as animal, for no animal is capable of expressing such pollution or of exhibiting such vice; they had a meaning which humanity alone dragged down to its deepest corruption can convey." And yet people thought the Versailles government extreme because they shot only eight thousand of these scoundrels after they had polluted, plundered, and burned the fairest city of the world. They have learned since, and perhaps they have regretted, that "they scotched the snake, not killed it."

Mr. Adolphus' memories of the second siege are curious and often exciting. Many of them he shared with Lawrence Oliphant. This is good reading for one who desires to acquire what the ascetic writers commend as contempt of the world. Is this passage from the testimony of an eye-witness in a European capital in 1871, or is it a diseased vision of a Swift brooding on Yahoo humanity? The Germans have just entered Paris. "A friend of mine saw a young woman, smartly dressed, but pale and seemingly half starved, trying to talk to some officers at the corner of the Rue de Presbourg in the Avenue Josephine. And then, when she turned away from them, he saw also, to his sickening disgust, a band of blackguards rush at her. Within half a minute all her clothes were torn from the unhappy creature and she was cruelly beaten; and there she stood shrieking in the sunlight with nothing left untattered on her but her stays and boots, her bare flesh bleeding everywhere from cuts. And this is what those ruffians called 'patriotism'."

Since these were the men who made the Commune it is hardly necessary to dwell on the various exhibitions of odious imbecility that crowded on the attention of this observant foreigner from his house by the Parc Monceau. But it may be worth while to record this definition of the Commune which he cites from a friend to close his chapter: It was "a yell from the lower man; an up-seething from the turbid sources; a snatch at the impossible and undefined; a failure where success would have meant a

nation's shame." One turns with relief from these gloomy pictures of abject degradation and merciless brutality to the author's futile interview with M. Worth, the man milliner, on the philosophy of clothes, of which indeed M. Worth seemed to understand very little, save that "women dress, of course, for two reasons: for the pleasure of making themselves smart, and for the still greater joy of snuffing out the others. . . . They deliver themselves to me in confidence and I decide for them; that makes them happy. If I tell them they are suited, they need no further evidence. . . . Most of them leave it all to me. . . . I don't want people to invent for themselves. If they did I should lose half my trade." This certainly has a naïve charm for *mon-sieur qui paie*. But the whole chapter is genial and worth reading, as is also the rather more cynical tale of the passing of poor, vain Boulanger and his "arrogant" black horse "composed principally of a brandishing tail, a new-moon neck, a looking-glass skin, and the actions of Demosthenes." The whole was a good sermon to the (misquoted) text from the Biglow Papers: "I du believe In humbug generally, because I find it is a thing, That has a solid vally."

Least satisfactory, perhaps, are the concluding chapters on the Opera and on Indoor Life. The former is too antiquarian, the latter too indefinite, and it suffers by comparison with the psychologic keenness of Hamerton's "French and English." But even these chapters have given the reviewer a pleasure which he trusts his readers may share as he joins with the author in the hope that the *parisiennes* may some day "recover fully those graces, those capacities, and that intelligence . . . which were so delightfully distinctive of their mothers."

J. A.

TWO BOOKS ON ENGLISH POETRY.¹

It is now some years since Mr. Matthew Arnold declared his conviction that "the future of poetry is immense." If the young poets of the Bodley Head fail to make us believe that the critic was also a prophet, the number of volumes appearing year by year devoted to the study of poetry might well make us assent to the proposition. There may be a lull in poetic growth, but it at any rate gives us time to take an inventory of what has been already stored away. New editions of old favorites are constantly appearing and new critics arise to sing their praises, until one is tempted to wonder whether there is anything new left to say. It is not a little characteristic of our times, however, that until the appearance of Mr. Courthope's volume and of Mr. Stopford Brooke's a few years since, there has been practically no attempt made since the days of Thomas Warton to write the history of English poetry as a whole. The rubicund Professor of Poetry at Oxford was, however, more of an antiquarian than a historian, and though his book is still valuable and has been edited more than once with copious notes by other scholars, it was ample time for a modern scholar, who by the way is likely soon to fill Warton's chair at Oxford, to undertake the task in the full light that modern research has been able to throw on the fascinating but difficult subject. That Mr. Courthope should have such a clear field is natural enough when we remember the fear our specialists have of entering upon a too ambitious task, but we are glad that two scholars at least have dared to make the venture. Mr. Brooke's volume was, as our readers will remember, de-

¹ *A History of English Poetry.* By W. J. Courthope, M.A. Vol. I. New York and London: Macmillan & Co., 1895.

The Greater Victorian Poets. By Hugh Walker, M.A. London: Swan Sonnenschein & Co. New York: Macmillan & Co., 1895. 8vo. pp. 332.

voted to Anglo-Saxon poetry ; in other words did not come down beyond the times of Alfred the Great. On such a scale he will have to outlive Ranke if he is to accomplish his purpose. Mr. Courthope is more modest — his first volume gets us into the sixteenth century and he thinks that five will complete the work. We sincerely trust that he may live to finish it, although we are not prepared to say that we consider his first volume altogether satisfactory.

The difficulties in the way of such an attempt as we have been describing are by no means summed up when attention is drawn to the magnitude of the subject. The choice of a proper method of study and presentation affords fully as many difficulties as the nature of the subject itself. How far a strictly chronological method should be followed, how far a strictly logical method by categories, how much of biographical and historical detail should be admitted—these are questions that must be confronted and must be expected to stagger even the boldest critic and historian. If they did not stagger Pope and Gray, who both contemplated writing a history of English Poetry, and had both thought out a scheme of composition, they would have made themselves potentially felt before either of these great men had gone very far toward the accomplishment of his design. They have evidently been felt by Mr. Courthope, and we cannot say that he has always answered them to our satisfaction ; but he deserves credit at least for his bravery.

On certain important points, however, Mr. Courthope has, in our opinion, decided most wisely. He has avoided the antiquarianism that was Warton's stumbling-block and the diffuseness of treatment which is Mr. Brooke's. He has rightly, too, confined biographical details to their smallest compass and he has eschewed making a mere catalogue of English poems with critical remarks attached to important items. He has aimed to give his book the unity and finish of a work of art, and has deserved and met with not a little success in his endeavor. But unfortunately he has not been able in our opinion to preserve that balance of judgment

and taste which is necessary to the production of thoroughly successful work of any kind. He has been possessed of leading ideas and pushed them too far. One of his ideas is that one cannot study properly the evolution of a people's poetry apart from that people's development in social, religious, and political matters. A most true and fruitful idea indeed if kept within bounds, but unfortunately Mr. Courthouse does not always keep it within bounds, and hence many of his pages read as if they belonged to a history of the English people instead of to a history of English poetry. Mr. Courthouse might reply that he could not assume a sufficient knowledge of English history in his readers and had, therefore, to supply information that he would otherwise have willingly omitted. This may be a satisfactory extenuation of his method of procedure, but the fact remains that he has impaired the unity of his book and probably failed to attain his end, for it is likely that the readers who can follow his reasoning at all could have done it without his excursions into history, while those readers who could not unassisted follow his reasoning, will hardly be able to do it with the limited historical information he has been able to give them.

Another leading idea that has hampered our author is his belief that the Renaissance was not a great cataclysm in the intellectual history of Europe but that, in his own words, "the tradition of Greco-Roman Culture, carried through the barbarous ages in many slender ducts and channels," mingled "the spirit of the ancient world with the infant civilization of Europe" and "prepared the way for the great revival of arts and letters." This idea again is, in our opinion, a most true and fruitful one, and Mr. Courthouse was right to insist upon it,—but not to the extent that he has done. The pages that he devotes to it are extremely interesting and valuable in themselves, but long before they are finished the reader is asking himself when he will hear something more about English poetry. The same thing is true of our author's constant reference to the effects of the system of education fostered by the Church. He has al-

lowed his leading ideas to become hobbies and so has seriously impaired the unity of his work. This need not have been the case if he had exercised common caution and subjected his book to a severe revision.

Thus far we have found fault with Mr. Courthope for not thoroughly assimilating his great scholarship to the purposes of his noble undertaking, but unfortunately there is a section of his book which suffers not from too much scholarship, but from too little. We refer to his meagre and unsatisfactory account of Anglo-Saxon poetry. While we are not of those fond enthusiasts who hope that a time will come when *Beowulf* will be as familiar to us as the *Iliad*, we cannot see how any historian of English poetry could be satisfied with the slight treatment of the body of Old English verse that Mr. Courthope has given us. He shows not only lack of appreciation for it but lack of knowledge about it, and it is to be hoped that when he finishes his task and undertakes to give us a definitive edition of what in spite of all our criticism we believe will be a great work, he will be resolute enough to rewrite his entire chapter.

In dealing with mediæval poetry our author is on firmer though not perhaps quite safe ground, and many of his most interesting pages are given to the subject. But undoubtedly the best chapter in his book is that devoted to Langland, whose genius he sympathizes with and understands. We can quarrel with the forty odd pages embraced in this chapter only when we find that Chaucer receives not quite ten pages more. This is surely disproportionate, and is probably accounted for by the fact that Mr. Courthope is not exactly the Chaucer enthusiast we would have him be. His chapter on this master poet contains, however, much that is interesting and well put, but it is curious to notice how carefully all mention of our own great Chaucerian scholar, Professor Lounsbury, is avoided. No one but an Englishman would quote twice from Professor A. W. Ward and not once from Professor Lounsbury.

The remaining chapters of the book are good, but none

is excellent except, perhaps, that on the Progress of Allegory. The Rise of the Drama is sketched rather perfunctorily, but we are glad that the work is to be made complete by its inclusion of dramatic poetry. Some of the individual poets mentioned are treated altogether too briefly in our judgment—for example, Robert Henryson. Poems, too, that are strikingly good, like Dunbar's "Lament" for his brother bards, remain unnoticed—at least we have caught no reference to them. A certain lack of sympathy, too, is apparent in the treatment of poets like Skelton and Alexander Barclay who, while not lending themselves to enthusiastic commendation, are surely more interesting figures than Mr. Courthope has represented them to be. But no one can quarrel with our author's estimate of that delightful personality, King James I. of Scotland.

To sum up, we regard Mr. Courthope's first volume as the work of a scholar and a lover of poetry who has approached his subject in a worthy way and written of it in a manner to attract respect if not admiration. We believe that as the author proceeds with his task and enters upon periods that are more interesting in themselves and about which his own knowledge is greater, his treatise will gain steadily in value. In fact we look forward with eagerness to his account of the age of Dryden and Pope, where he is likely to be at his best, and we have to thank him for many an interesting hour already spent with him, and many a profitable thought derived from a volume which may be safely commended to all lovers of English poetry.

Professor Hugh Walker's book is of a very different *genre* from that of Mr. Courthope. It is the monograph of a specialist and is saved from narrowness only by the fact that the three poets with which it deals cover between them a very wide area in the domain of the human spirit. Tennyson, Browning, and Matthew Arnold are, too, very far removed from Chaucer and Langland, which of course accentuates the contrast between the two books. In our opinion the chief value of Mr. Walker's study lies in the fact

that he so boldly advocates the right of Matthew Arnold to stand beside Browning and Tennyson as a great Victorian poet. But Mr. Walker's boldness is after all not so remarkable to anyone who has noted the slow but sure rise of Arnold's poetical reputation in the last twenty years. Few critics are now likely to be caught napping as Mr. Stedman was in his notice of him in the first edition of the "Victorian Poets."

Our author treats his wide and important subject in twelve chapters, the first eight of which deal with the poets individually, and with their works more or less concretely, while the last four deal with such general topics as "The Poetry of Nature," "The Influence of Science," "The Social and Political Aspects of the Poets," and "Faith and Doubt." Browning and Tennyson, as is proper, have more space devoted to them than Arnold has, but the latter is evidently very near to Mr. Walker's heart, a fact which is most creditable to him. Although he tries to hold the balance even between the two older poets in the attention he pays to each, it is quite evident that it sways in the direction of Browning, which is again in our opinion quite creditable to him. But it is not often that one can discover any preference sufficiently pronounced to warrant one in labelling Professor Walker a Tennysonian, a Browningite, or an Arnoldite. Indeed, as we shall soon see, his endeavors to hold his balance so even may be said to have caused his criticism to suffer, painstaking and conscientious impartiality being too often a solvent of enthusiasm.

Speaking generally, Professor Walker strikes us as a safe and thoughtful critic, though not an original or specially interesting one. If there is one quality that he lacks as a critic more than another it is the quality of enthusiasm. He evidently admires and understands the poets of whom he writes, but if he is enthusiastic about them, he has not succeeded in making his enthusiasm contagious, at least to one reader. One reads on and on, and assents or dissents, gets a new thought or meets an old one, and yet is never stirred

unless it be by some noble quotation from the poet under examination. Of information about Browning, Tennyson, and Arnold the book is full, but of inspiration about them it is empty — at least to us.

But we are doing Mr. Walker and his book an injustice. We are practically assuming by our tone of comment that unless a man can write with humor and enthusiasm, he must hold his tongue. If a censorship of the press were established on such lines, there would be an almost universal smash in the publishing business. There is room for just such sound, sober, intelligent, and reverent criticism of master poets as Professor Walker has given us, and there are thousands of readers who will be both edified and interested by what he has to say. Any one of his chapters would make a good popular lecture or a magazine article, if editors could bring themselves to publish serious literary studies, and his whole volume will be found very useful by any college class engaged in the study of modern poetry, or by any busy man who wishes to inform himself in an expeditious way about these great modern authors. Special students of these authors will of course consult it and with profit. We cordially recommend it for use also by Chataqua and University Extension students — by everybody in short who is not unreasonable enough to demand that every author whom he deigns to read shall be capable of speaking disrespectfully of the equator.

X.

JOWETT'S COLLEGE SERMONS.¹

What strikes us at first glance and what continues to the end to constitute the chief charm of these sermons by the late Master of Balliol, is the wonderful sympathy of the preacher with his audience. His intimate knowledge of college life, his keen insight into the peculiar temptations and difficulties to which the average college man is exposed, enable him to speak out of the fullness of his own experience with a directness and applicability to present conditions which it is difficult for one not having an acquaintance with college life to appreciate.

The author of these sermons knows the young man's heart, as one who has lost none of the freshness of youth with his increasing years. His ability to analyze motives, to sum up the various forces for good or ill, which constitute the undergraduate's social and intellectual environment, his reputation as a scholar, his broad culture and thorough knowledge of the world, his well-known moderation and dislike of exaggeration, give to these addresses a weight of authority and ripeness of judgment which no other book of the kind, with which we are familiar, possesses. To the casual reader, many of the subjects treated of in this volume may seem commonplace and beneath the dignity of sermons addressed to university men. But this, no doubt, is the very reason why they were so cordially received and appreciated.

The student-body felt that they were aimed not so much at their heads as at their hearts. That the preacher was not one who thought it necessary, because he was addressing college men, to air his knowledge or to tickle their fancies by the flow of his rhetoric and the eloquence of his rounded periods. He appealed to them as one who

¹ *College Sermons.* By the late Benjamin Jowett, M.A., Master of Balliol College, Oxford. New York and London: Macmillan & Co., 1895.

thoroughly understood them, and was sincerely desirous of helping them in some definite and practical way. A glance at the contents will show how practical and to the point these sermons are.

Among the subjects treated, we find most excellent advice given on the "Art of Conversation," "The Value of Correct Speaking," "The Advantages to be Derived from Temperate Eating and Drinking," "The Use and Abuse of Money," "Excessive Shyness," "College Friendships," "Late Hours and Overwork," "The Value of Undergraduate Years." This last was the preacher's favorite theme. He repeatedly recurs to it, and upon every possible occasion seeks to impress upon his hearers a sense of its importance. On the very first page we are met with the somewhat paradoxical statement that "youth is the most solemn period of life." The meaning of this is more fully explained elsewhere, when the author tells us that there are no years in a man's life of equal importance to those spent in college. To quote his exact words: "I think we may say without exaggeration, that there are no years of equal importance, and that we shall never have such another start or beginning in life, in which all things (including the recollection of our faults and follies of youth) pass away and all things become new." Jowett's method, though sometimes varied, was first to outline in a broad, general way his subject, frequently stating categorically the different heads under which he proposed to treat his text, and then to fasten definitely upon a single point and to spend his whole strength in illustrating and developing it.

The many points of view from which a subject is looked at, as well as the preacher's ability to see both sides of a question, give a breadth and largeness of outlook which must make these sermons appeal to men of all shades of religious belief. The language is as simple and direct as possible. His editor tells us that Jowett was extremely careful, even fastidious, in the use of words, as is evidenced by the frequent alterations, erasures, and additions in the man-

uscript. The work of re-writing his sermons cost him so much care and trouble that this, no doubt, accounts for his extreme unwillingness to publish them during his life. To one of his sermons was found added the note: "This is the eighth time I have tried to re-write this sermon and have failed." Such extreme carefulness, while it insures clearness and elegance of diction, is not without the fault of making his language too severely classical for a good sermon style. A freer use of illustration, of which there is very little, and of what the rhetoricians call "animation of style," would have added greatly to the charm and permanent value of his sermons.

One looks almost in vain for some trace of that dry humor for which Jowett was so famous. We do, indeed, catch occasional flashes of his wit and sarcasm, as for example when speaking of the religious movements that have passed over England in the last half century, he dryly remarks that "religion has had a very small place in any party movement." But perhaps the most noteworthy characteristic of Jowett's preaching, if we may judge from this volume of his sermons, is his healthy optimism. He never despairs of a situation, neither is he blind to the dangers of the times. With a true prophet's eye, he sees underneath and beyond the changing currents of modern civilization, and confidently asserts that there is progress all along the line. In speaking of the relation of science to religion, which a few years ago when these sermons were delivered, was much more of a burning question than now, he exhibits a fearlessness and candor that must commend his utterances on this subject to all lovers of truth. To quote his own words: "And we may even go a step further and say that the progress of science and knowledge has been an aid and support of the religion of Christ, and is gradually becoming incorporated with it, and more than any other cause has tended to purify it from narrowing and hurtful superstitions, which we easily recognize in other religions, or in other forms of the Christian religion, not so easily in our own.

Therefore I say that this opposition is already melting away and becoming a matter of names, and that Christianity is in this respect not in a worse, but in a better position than formerly, because no longer wasting her energies on a fruitless struggle, but seeking to embrace all men and the good and true in all things within the limits of the gospel of Christ."

He finds the chief cause for the slow growth of religion in our own times to be a too great narrowness and exclusiveness in the Church of God herself. He notes with pleasure the decay of party spirit, and gives on this point the very wholesome advice "that where there is honesty and self-sacrifice and a love of truth, the matters in which we agree are far more important than those in which we differ can ever be." In speaking of the Church's attitude towards the social questions of the day, he held that a deeper knowledge of human nature has taught the Church the absurdity of trying to save men's souls while failing to relieve the physical wants of their bodies. In this respect he would, no doubt, sympathize with the efforts now being made to improve the material condition of the laboring classes as the first step towards their intellectual and moral advancement. His attitude toward the "higher criticism" may be inferred from the fact that he denies that we have any right to claim for the historical books of the Old Testament a greater degree of historical certainty than we find in other ancient histories. "We cannot exempt them from the principles of criticism which we apply to similar writings; the attempt to do so would destroy not only their authority but their meaning."

While others were trembling for the safety of the ark of God, he saw only the rising of a mighty tide of truth which men were powerless to stem or roll back. Hence one chief value of these sermons for a critical and truth-loving age is that there is no quibbling, no dodging of living issues, and no attempt to deceive. You cannot resist the feeling that the preacher himself is so securely intrenched in his own firm faith that he can afford to weigh every

question calmly and dispassionately. To those who are under the cloud of unbelief and equally to those who are called upon to deal with unbelief in all its various phases, we most heartily recommend the sermon from the familiar text: "Lord I believe, help thou my unbelief."—St. Mark ix., 24. The profound knowledge of the human heart which this sermon displays could have been possible only in one who himself had keenly felt the difficulties in the way of the honest sceptic. Nothing can exceed the sound sense and good judgment with which he handles this delicate and difficult subject. Jowett finds the final and only convincing argument for christianity in a meek and holy life. "Too often where a man's vanity will not allow us to refute his arguments, when the mere narrowness of his mind prevents his comprehending the length, and breadth, and height of the love of God, or where our own feeble powers or want of learning may prevent our doing justice to the same, we may draw him to us by cords of sympathy. We may make him feel that we have something (if, indeed, we have it) that he has not, something that he would feign have, and that human nature itself seems to long for, that he sees to be the support of others on the bed of sickness and in the grave and gate of death."

"Inward experience" is the rock on which he seeks to plant the feet of the young disciple of Jesus and is really the key to his own theological position. "To live the life of Christ," this is the essence of a true and lively faith. The one test which he would apply to every doctrine and every religious movement is: "Does it make men better?" "That is the shortest, the simplest, and the most vital question which any man can ask about himself or about his Church, about the society in which he lives or about the country of which he is a citizen."

The Honorable Lionel A. Tollemache, the pupil and disciple of Jowett, in his delightful and highly appreciative memoir of his friend and teacher, has said that consciously or unconsciously Jowett "subordinated religion to morality."

Perhaps, if one may judge from his sermons, it would be more correct to say that he regarded morality as the sole test of religion. But if by religion is meant the formal and doctrinal side of christianity, there is a sense in which the remark is true. Yet if the author of these sermons seems to lay more stress upon holy and pure living than upon those means of grace which were meant to aid man in bringing forth the peaceable fruits of righteousness, we cannot but feel grateful to him for insisting as strongly as he does upon the necessity for a high standard of conduct as the ultimate test of spiritual truth. "By their fruits ye shall know them."

In conclusion, the writer of this review would like to record the pleasure and profit which he has personally derived from a careful perusal of this volume, and he would further most cordially recommend it to all interested in the training and education of the youth of our country, and more especially to the clergy who are charged with this grave duty.

W. A. GUERRY.

A FEW WORDS ABOUT THE POPULAR DIS- LIKE OF ENGLAND.

The recent imbroglio between the United States and Great Britain over the question of the Venezuelan boundary has given the more thoughtful citizens of the two countries many things to think of. It has brought plainly to the minds of Englishmen their isolation as a people and nation, and has shown them that their policy of constant territorial aggrandizement must either cease or be prosecuted under increasing difficulties, not to say dangers. It has shown Americans, on the other hand, how impossible it is even for our ablest statesmen to escape the infection of partisan politics; how idle it is to expect calm deliberation from our legislative bodies, constituted as they are at present. It has also shown us how dangerous it is for any people to formulate so-called doctrines in a field where expediency is the only safe guide of action. But perhaps the most interesting and important lesson that has been given to the two peoples relates to the necessity for inquiring into the causes of the manifest dislike for England by all classes in this country, and for endeavoring to bring about cordial relations between two great nations of the same lineage.

In the short space at our disposal we can naturally throw but little light on this interesting and important subject, and we shall confine ourselves to one phase of it. There can be little doubt that the passions engendered by the Revolutionary War and the War of 1812, fostered by the rather one sided treatment of the periods by historians and men of letters, have continued to smoulder more or less among the masses of the people and are a partial cause of the phenomenon under discussion. There can be equally little doubt that in the North and West the openly expressed sympathy of the British aristocracy for the Southern Confederacy left behind a resentful feeling that has not entirely

died out, while in the South disappointed hopes of English intervention have effected a similar though less striking result. It is manifest further that the snarling and captious criticism of America and Americans indulged in by early English travellers as well as the snobbish and inconsiderate behavior of many English visitors and sojourners has tended to alienate the two peoples, to say nothing of the leavening of public opinion in America by the large Irish element in our midst. But educated Americans have long since formed fairly correct views on the subject of the three wars just referred to, they can now read Mrs. Trollope and Dickens with a smile, and they are not anxious about the Irish vote, yet with the exception of a few cosmopolitan novelists, spinster essayists, and certain decadent professors, these same educated Americans will confess to a sympathy with the masses in their dislike for Englishmen in the abstract, although they will hasten to express an admiration for all that is great in English history and literature, and a liking for many individual Englishmen. Of course professed Anglo-maniacs, denationalized tourists, and students trained by decadent professors, cannot by any possibility be reckoned under the head of educated Americans.

Now why is it that men whose whole training has tended to liberate them from prejudice, should cherish a feeling closely akin to hostility toward other men who are like them in appearance, who use the same language, who have much the same laws and customs, and who hold the same religious faith? Why is it that Americans dislike Englishmen much in the same way that Frenchmen do? The answer is that the Englishman as a rule is stolid and insolent toward the American pretty much as he has been toward Frenchmen for hundreds of years. Community of language, laws, customs, and faith ought long since to have brought Englishmen and Americans to understand and respect one another; but insolence will efface natural affection between the nearest of kin, and mere consanguinity of race disappears entirely before it.

This is a hard accusation to bring against a great people, it is one, however, that has been made against the English nation for hundreds of years, and when we investigate closely we find that it is well founded. Not, of course, that there are not notable exceptions to the rule of English insolence toward other peoples. There is nothing but sympathy and courtesy toward America manifest in the writings of such men as Mr. Bryce, Sir Walter Besant, Mr. Gosse, and Dr. Richard Garnett; there is nothing but genuine friendliness and good feeling manifest in their intercourse with Americans. But unfortunately the sympathy of such men as Mr. Bryce for America and of such men as Mr. George Moore and the late Mr. Hamerton for France have not sufficed to leaven the mass even of their cultured fellow countrymen and Americans and Frenchmen alike are compelled to confront a wall of stolidity and insolence whenever circumstances bring them in contact with Englishmen either at home or abroad. Travelling Americans may often be vulgar and Frenchmen may often be finicky and flashy, but vulgarity and flashiness are as nothing when compared with the bad manners of a typical Englishman of the upper classes. The stolidity of the British middle and lower classes is in itself bad enough, but philistinism is common everywhere, and cultured Frenchmen and Americans would make allowance for it, but the insolence of the British "barbarian" nobility and of the educated classes who aspire to barbaric adoption is something that is foreign and distasteful to the cultured classes of other countries.

This insolence is shown in many ways of which we need here notice only one or two. It is impossible for an educated American to receive any civilities or attention in England without being made to feel that his host or friend regards it as a very strange thing that a country like America should have produced so decent a person. In other words, the compliment paid to the individual American is offset by the implied insult to his country and people. But it is due to Englishmen to say that the habit of indulging in this sort

of gratuitous insult to America is greatly encouraged by the silly and unpatriotic tone that many expatriated Americans allow themselves to take when speaking of a country that is well rid of them. They speak with bated breath of American political corruption, when as likely as not one of their hearers wears a baronet's title which he purchased for so many thousand pounds paid into the party chest for a campaign which cost considerably more than any ever held in America. They bewail the influence of the Sugar Trust on the American Senate, but forget that a brewer can buy a seat in the House of Lords. They lament the lack of popular education and culture in America, and forget to keep their eyes and ears open to the signs of equal if not greater lack of education and culture in England. And so the Englishman takes his cue from these wretched expatriated sycophants, and his natural lack of refinement prompts him to condole with his next American acquaintance on the speedy downfall of the Republic.

But this sort of quasi-insult is, perhaps, the most bearable feature of the normal Englishman's treatment of the normal American. He is usually not satisfied with mere general condemnation, explicit or implicit, of your country; he singles out special topics for comment or question. He asks how you, as an educated man, can tolerate the use of such a word as "elevator" instead of "lift", and when you mildly suggest that the longer word may be used in America because the houses are higher there, he looks at you with a dumb surprise. If you use any expression that he is not familiar with, he immediately says something about an "Americanism", and it would do you no good to quote a passage from Shakspeare containing it, for he would think you were chaffing him or else were taking a liberty with a poet belonging exclusively to himself. He will first tell you that English investors have little confidence in American commercial honor, and then ask you how you can possibly bring yourself to spell the word (for which you have so little use) without a "u".

But the individual Englishman is bearable when he is compared with his newspapers. There he is in his element of mixed anonymity and insolence. He refuses to review an American book because it has not been reprinted in England, or else he gives it a column of railing at American spelling. When a scholarly book comes over the water, he rubs his eyes and wonders how anything good can come out of Nazareth. He takes occasion when reviewing a posthumous volume of Lowell not merely to say that he does not regard Lowell as a great poet (with which judgment the present writer would heartily agree) but to maintain that the acceptance of Lowell as a poet is a sign of utter lack of culture on the part of the American people, forgetting at the time he writes that there is in America no literary journal that can at all compare for jejune dulness with the periodical in which his fling at American culture occurs.

Meanwhile it is rare to find in an American newspaper of high rank any bias against any English scholar's work merely because it is English. It is hard to find in American society any disposition to treat an English visitor in any other fashion than as a gentleman whose antecedents and environment are such as gentlemen are supposed to have. Americans, in other words, behave toward Englishmen just as they behave toward representatives from all other nations, and just as gentlemen treat one another in the best society the world over. They and the better classes of Frenchmen and Germans expect to be treated as gentlemen in return, but they are too often forced to encounter British insolence where they looked for politeness and kindness. When the Englishman mends his manners he will be both a better and a better liked man, and much of the present animosity with which the civilized world regards him will disappear.

AN OBSERVER.